Smithsonian

April 1989

Wide-ranging American masterpieces
from Thomas Hart Benton (p. 82)

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- Trip around the world for 2
- $35,000 Cash

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—**20 SECOND PRIZES:** Panasonic video camera/recorder

—**30 THIRD PRIZES:** Charmglow deluxe patio gas grill

—**450 FOURTH PRIZES:** Northwestern Bell Cordless Telephone

PLUS

A $15,000 CASH BONUS to Grand Prize Winner (see entry form below).

OFFICIAL RULES—NO PURCHASE NECESSARY

1) No purchase necessary. 2) To enter "Weekend Freedom" sweepstakes, check correct answers to questions found on entry form. Fill in your name, address and phone number and mail to "Weekend Freedom" Sweepstakes, P.O. Box 34007, Berkeley, MO 63134. No mechanical reproductions or facsimiles permitted. 3) Offer valid from 1/1/89 through 9/9/89. Enter as often as you wish, but each entry form must be mailed separately and postmarked no later than 9/9/89 and received no later than 9/16/89. Not responsible for lost, stolen, illegible or delayed mail. 4) Winners will be selected in a random drawing from among all official entries received. To win, each entry chosen must have correctly completed the questions, if not another entry will be drawn until all 511 prizes are awarded. Grand prize winner qualifies for additional $15,000 if bonus questions are answered correctly. Answers to bonus questions may be found on Greensweep® or Roundup® products located at your nearest dealer. Ohio residents may request answers to bonus questions by sending self-addressed, stamped envelope to "Weekend Freedom," 5840 Fee Fee Road, Hazelwood, MO 63042. Drawing will be held on or about 9/20/89. Odds of winning will be determined by the total number of eligible entries received. Winners will be notified by mail by 9/29/89. 5) **Grand Prize:** (1) Choice of one of the following 3 prizes: Winnebago "Warrior" Model WC420RG, Ford chassis w/optional equipment—radial tires, AM/FM stereo w/cassette, 13,000 BTU roof a/c, luggage rack, ladder & wheel covers; or, a trip for 2 around the world to include airfare, hotel accommodations for 13 nights & 14 days; or, $35,000 cash; each prize valued up to $35,000. **First Prize:** (10) Freedom Vacation Trip for 2 to include airfare, hotel accommodations for 3 days and 2 nights; approx. retail value: $3,000. Grand and First prize trip winners to choose location(s), airfare, hotel, gratuity and any other expenses up to retail value of the prize ($35,000 **Grand Prize** & $3,000 **First Prize**, respectively). **Second Prize:** (20) Panasonic Video camera/recorder, Model PV-400; approx. retail value: $1,400. **Third Prize:** (30) Charmglow deluxe patio gas grill, Model 9903; approx. retail value $375. **Fourth Prize:** (450) Northwestern Bell Cordless Telephone, Model #500, approx. retail value:: $80. 6) A **Bonus Prize** $15,000 cash will be awarded to Grand Prize winner if "bonus questions" are answered correctly. Total retail value of prizes including bonus prize: $155,250. 7) One prize per family or household. Must be 18 or older to participate. Sweepstakes open to residents of the continental U.S.A. except employees of Monsanto, their affiliates, subsidiaries, advertising and promotion agencies, distributors and sales representatives and the immediate families of each. Subject to all federal, state and local taxes. Void where prohibited or restricted by law. 8) Taxes are the sole responsibility of the winner. Prize is nontransferable. No prize substitutions. Winners are responsible for any loss or damage associated with use or enjoyment of any prizes. Guest of trip winners must sign liability and publicity releases. Travel times and dates subject to availability. Trips must be taken by September 30, 1990. 9) Drawing will be conducted by Fordyce Promotional Services, an independent judging organization. By entering sweepstakes, entrants accept and agree to these rules and the decisions of the judges, whose decisions are final. Winners will be required to sign affidavits of eligibility and release from liability. All forms must be returned within 14 days of mailing or prize will automatically be forfeited. By submitting an entry, winners allow use of their names, photographs and/or biographical information advertising this or similar promotions without additional consideration. All entry forms become property of sponsor and will not be returned. 10) For additional entry forms, send self-addressed stamped envelope to "Weekend Freedom Entry Forms," 5840 Fee Fee Road, St. Louis, MO 63042. (Washington & Vermont residents—no return postage required). One entry form per request per envelope. Requests must be received by 8/30/89. 11) For winners list, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to "Weekend Freedom Winner's List," P.O. Box 34036, Berkeley, MO 63134. Requests must be received by 12/31/89.

WEEKEND FREEDOM ENTRY FORM

Here's how to play: Complete this entry form and return it to us by 9/9/89. All correct entries will be included in our sweepstakes drawing on or about 9/20/89. From the information provided in the photo at left, check the appropriate boxes to indicate:

1. Greensweep® Weed and Feed should be used in May through June to kill more than 30 types of weeds. ☐True ☐False
2. Greensweep® Preemergent Crabgrass Preventer should be used in spring to keep crabgrass from appearing in summer. ☐True ☐False
3. Roundup® kills up and growing weeds and grasses, roots and all. ☐True ☐False
4. Roundup® kills weeds in driveway and sidewalk cracks, in mulched areas, between patio bricks and along fences. ☐True ☐False

Bonus Questions: Complete both of the phrases below by finding the answers on any Roundup® and Greensweep® Weed & Feed packages. If you're the Grand Prize Winner, your correct answers win you a $15,000 Cash Bonus!

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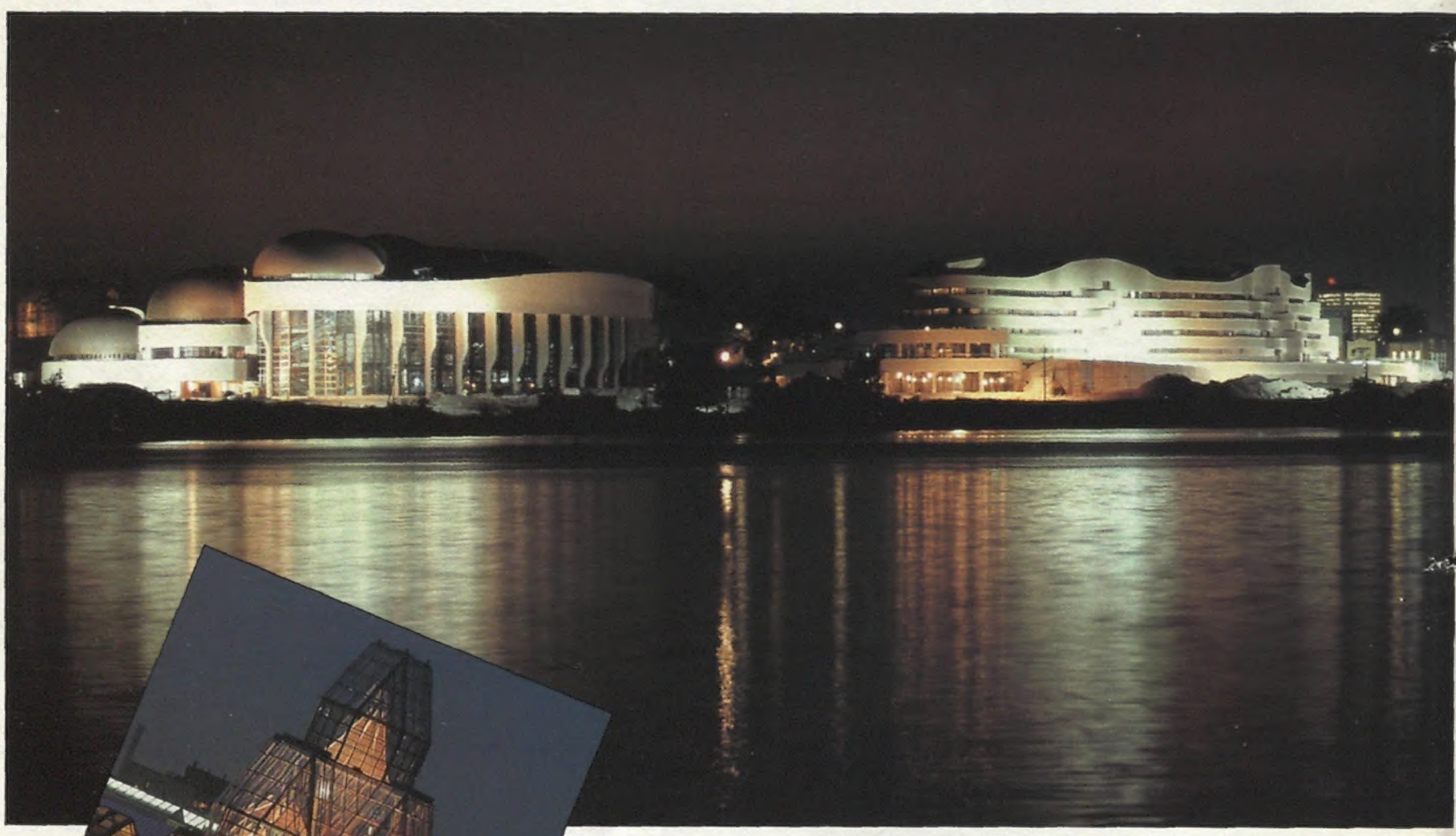
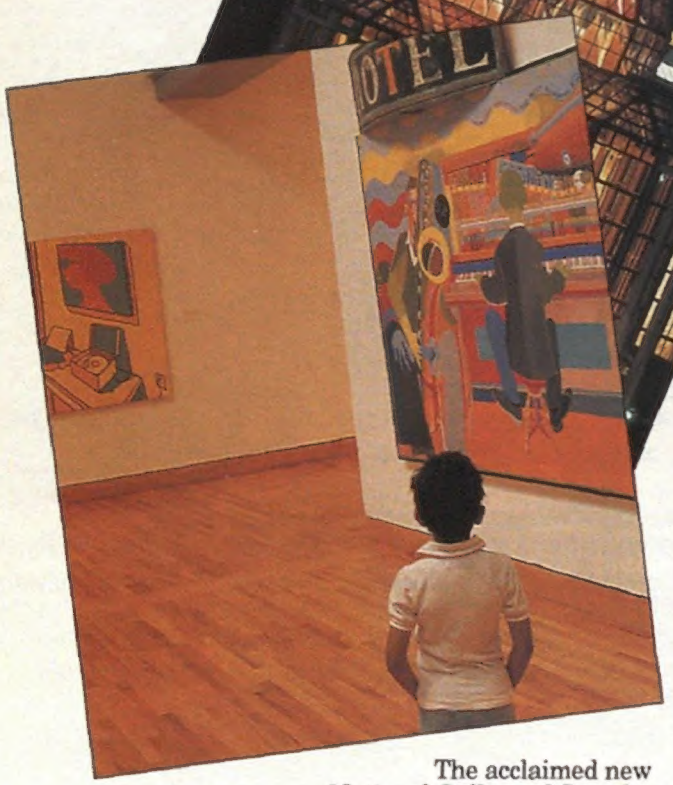
Ottawa-Hull Celebrates the new Canadian Museum of Civilization



The new Canadian Museum of Civilization opens June 29.



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April 1989

Smithsonian

Volume 20, Number 1

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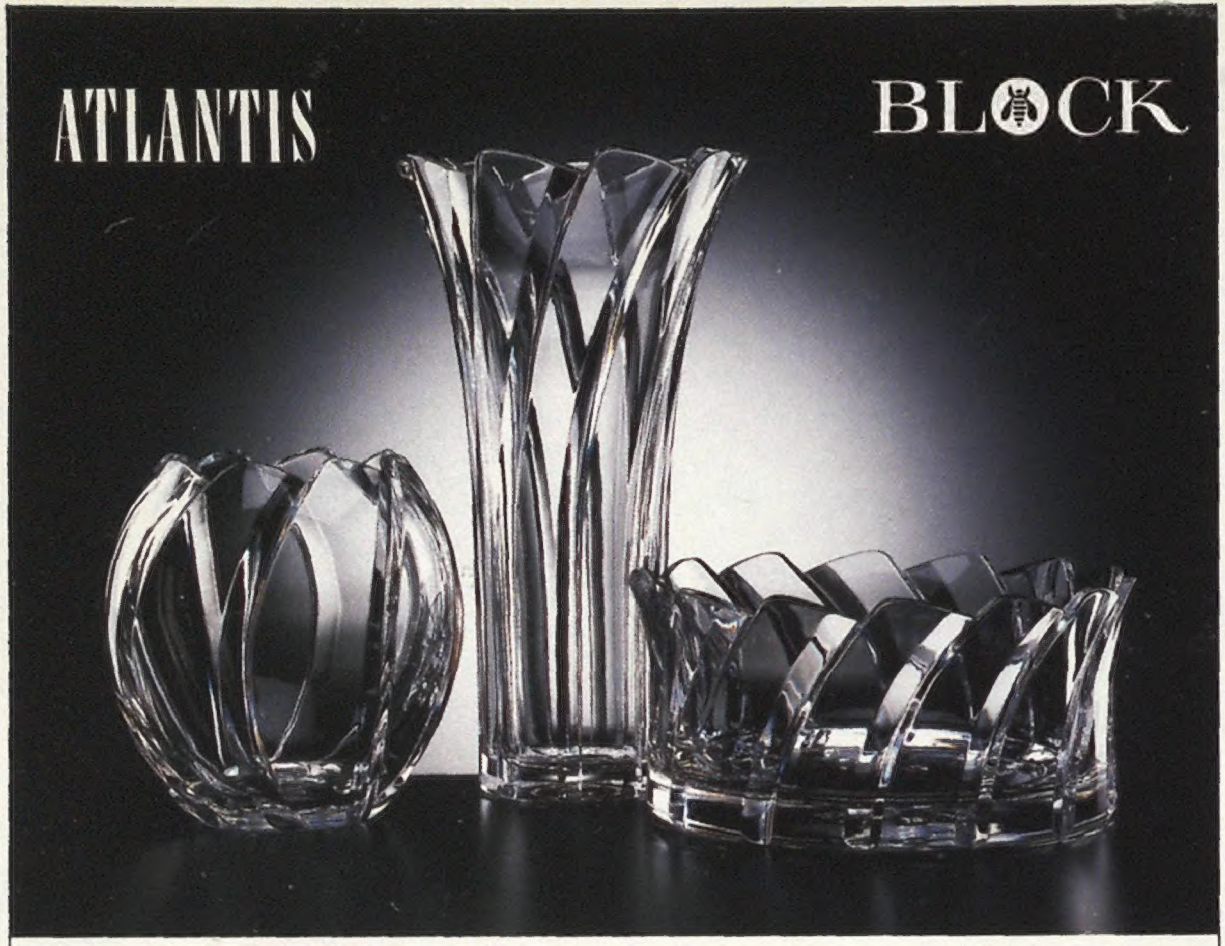

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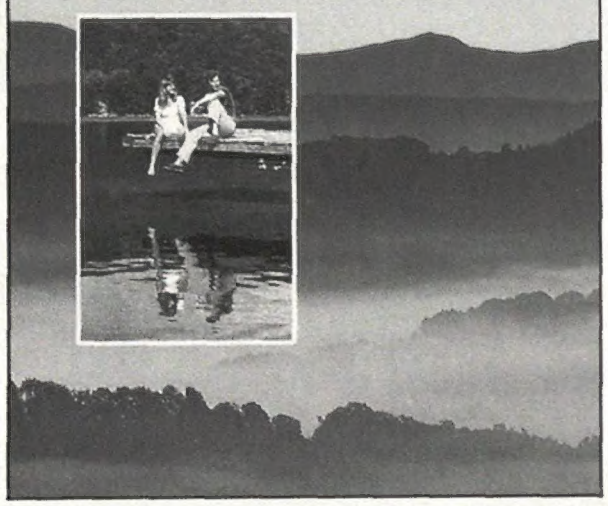

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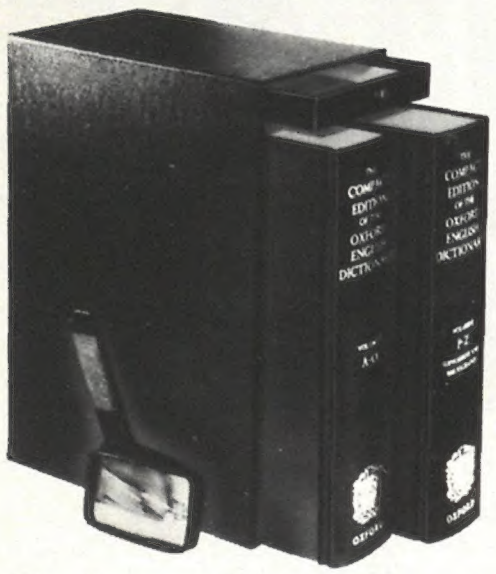

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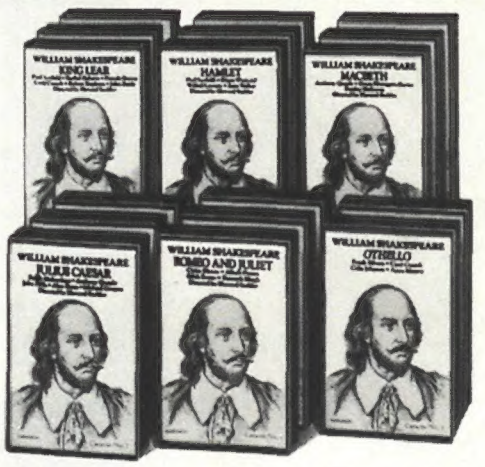

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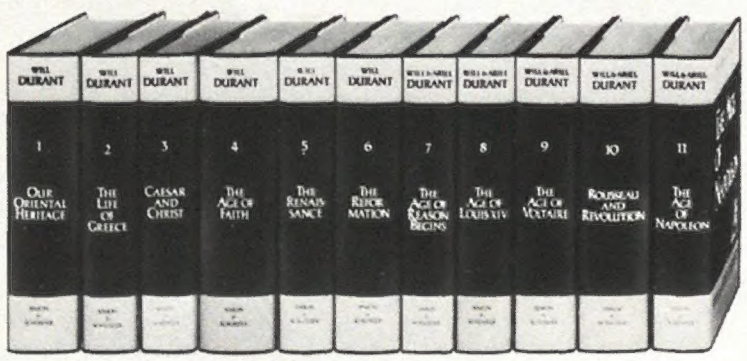
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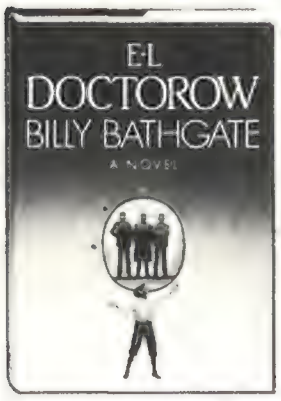

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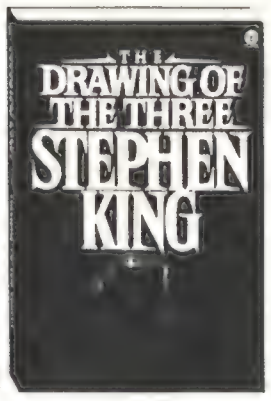

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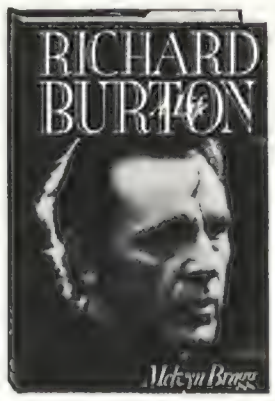

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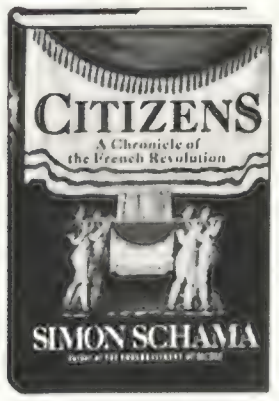

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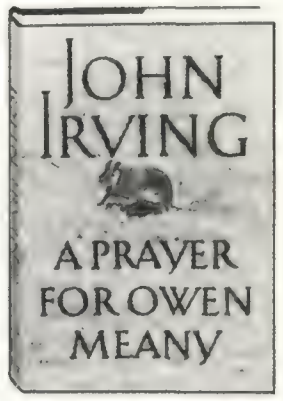

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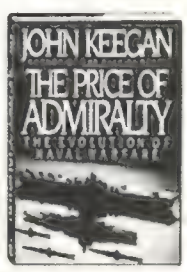

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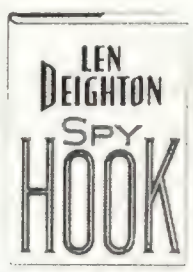

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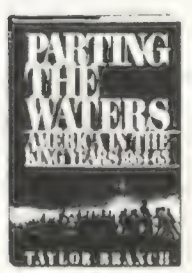

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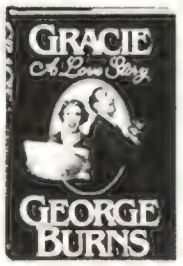

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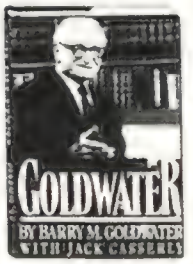

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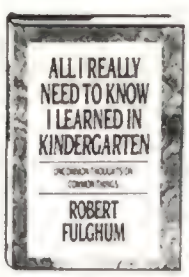

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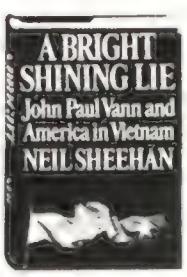

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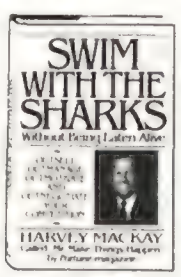

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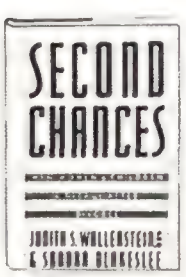

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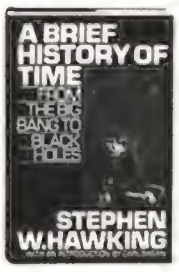

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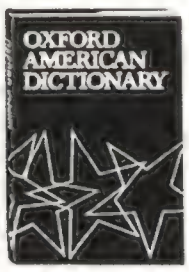

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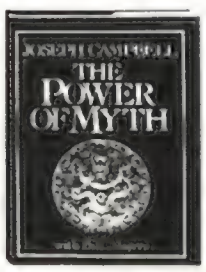

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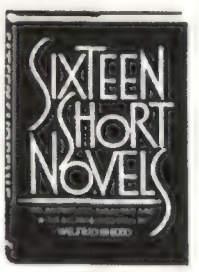

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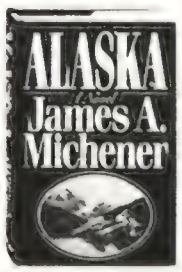

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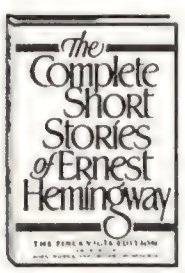

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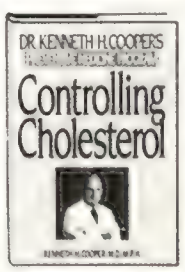

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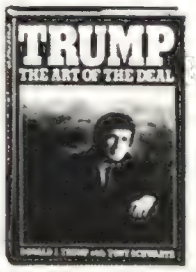

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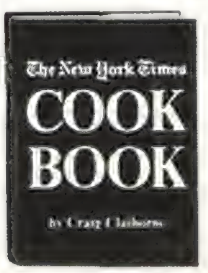

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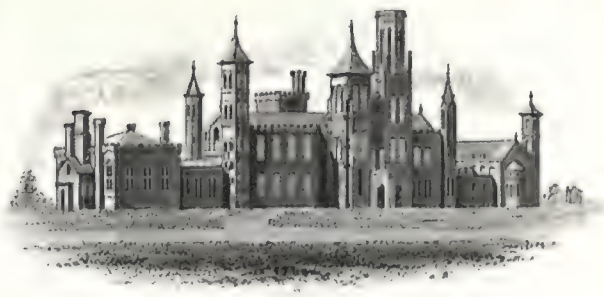


Smithsonian horizons

Could our current capabilities for information storage and retrieval open a whole new world of ideas?

We hear on all sides that we are in the throes of an Information Age. Testifying to its scale, rapidity and cumulative impact on our lives is an ambitious permanent exhibition now in the final stages of preparation at the National Museum of American History. But the striking prevalence of that term, "information," prompts an uneasy reflection that it is replacing older, richer and more resonant words like "knowledge," "wisdom" and "learning."

Knowledge and information are by no means synonymous. Information has a much higher, but ill-assorted and less well evaluated, fact content. Information is also largely value-free, lacking in conceptual structure, and impersonal. In the context of the computer-driven age in which it has come into vogue, it is by definition readily transmissible. Knowledge, by contrast, is the highly personalized burden of a scholar in an age of books. Ideas and hypotheses rest on—but also hold together—its artfully composed associations of facts, insights, logic and assumptions. It defies easy transmission in bits or bytes, and is usually inextricably intertwined with individual values. So information, although unquestionably adapted for an age of mass, polyglot communication and instantaneous, impersonal decision making, is both more and less than transmissible knowledge.

"Less" does not necessarily imply that information is somehow further than knowledge from "truth." Paradoxically but persuasively, classicist Paul Veyne has argued that the notion of truth as an absolute (as distinguished from a commonly held belief) is fairly recent. A concern for annotation and proof, for example, originated not with scholars in classical times but with later legal and scriptural disputations. Things took a different turn with the still much later rise of universities, for these were communities of fellow professionals whose approval one sought. So, as Veyne says, "if anything deserves the name of ideology, it is indeed truth."

The television component of our Information Age induces the frequent lament that people have ceased to read. But literacy, too, needs to be seen in historical context. It has some association with what are often identified as the West's special endowments of rationality, objectivity, enlightenment and material progress.

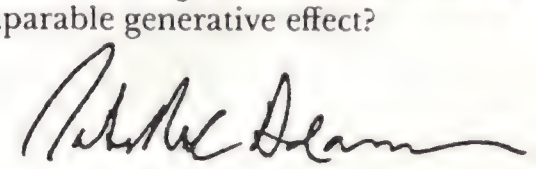
Back in my own preferred place and range of time, in Mesopotamia at the beginning of cities five millennia ago, it is doubtful whether these endowments were significantly advanced by literacy. Oral recitation tends to be broadly participative, added to and corrected by assembled listeners. Early cuneiform writing on clay tablets, on the other hand, had elites as its patrons, subject and audience. There was no need for the written language to continue as the language of everyday speech. If it enshrined traditions in permanent records, the history they reveal for Assyriologists is not the whole truth of all participants and dispassionate observers but—ideology.

Contexts change, of course. The introduction of the alphabet, with its vast simplification and systematization of the requirements for reading and writing, made a world of difference in popular accessibility. The printing press was a further giant step, providing the foundation for all but the latest variants of learning that are computer-dependent. But the point is that contexts *matter*. As the institutional, technological and conceptual climates shift, even the seemingly most inherent qualities of literacy also must shift.

The earliest Sumerian scribes wrote to keep accounts, but for some reason also made lists—gods, trees, professions—whose principles are obscure. Apart from services to their superiors, were they discovering the power of word-ordering rules to produce infinitely variable messages and to stimulate the flow of ideas? Some recent thinkers are likening the elaboration of logical reasoning to parallel computer architecture. Creating a lot of serial paths among which to choose can be productive even if the vast majority are unhelpful for the particular task at hand. Redundant semiconductor or neural networks, if at times able to operate independently in the face of unanticipated challenges, may constitute a kind of "Darwin Machine" that makes use of selection for improved adaptability, communicability or idea-generation.

The reasonably permanent inscribing and interpreting of word order is not just an affair of scribes, elites and ideologies, in other words. As the written memory grew and could be called back for review, it opened a cognitive window on a new world of ideas.

For all of the random noise and incoherence accompanying them, could our new capabilities for almost limitless information storage and retrieval have a comparable generative effect?



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Letters to the Editor

Mark Plotkin

Dear Sir: Anent your February article on Mark Plotkin, he once pointed out to our Senate Appropriations Committee that "we know approximately how many individual people there are on Earth—we even know about how many stars there are in the Universe. But we can't even venture an accurate guess on how many species there are on Earth." His mission—categorizing our natural world—is vitally important to anyone who cares about preserving the Earth's natural bounty.
Robert W. Kasten jr.
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir: It is ironic that while we are lamenting the demise of the rain forest—victim of encroaching "civilization"—we are at the same time busy finding ways to exploit it. If a cure for cancer or AIDS were found in the rain forest, I can't imagine U.S. pharmaceutical companies being content to let a handful of people wander about the forest picking leaves. They'd attack it on a much larger scale, and if any Indians did survive this intrusion, I doubt they would remain culturally intact, given the huge changes that have occurred simply from the presence of a few missionaries.

It also seems that in most places where natural objects of commercial value are found, so too are found the largest cities. Would the Amazon be an exception? It reminds me of the saying, "The meek shall inherit the Earth, and the strong shall take it away."
Sarah Stelfox
Kelly, Wyoming

William H. Whyte

Dear Sir: Mr. Whyte condones "100-percent conversations," during which participants become oblivious to their surroundings. While a student at the University of Michigan, in a perpetual rush to go places and get things done, I was annoyed by the delays caused by these 100-percenters standing in my way. I called such behavior the "Maximum Obstruction Principle."
Dave Bartczak
Huntington Woods, Michigan

Pietrasanta

Dear Sir: It is true that Fernando Botero is a famed sculptor and even more, a painter; but he is Colombian, not Chilean. He was born in Medellín, Colombia, in 1932.
Joan Bell
Mercer Island, Washington

Dear Sir: In Pietrasanta in 1518, Michelangelo signed a contract not for the tomb of Lorenzo de' Medici, but for marble to erect a facade for the Church of San Lorenzo in Florence. He enthusiastically proclaimed it would be "one of the most beautiful things in Italy," but after quarrying went on for more than three years, the contract was canceled. However, the immense quantity of marble quarried for that great project was not wasted. It was used to pave the floor of the cathedral in Florence.
William E. Wallace
St. Louis, Missouri

Slugs

Dear Sir: Hiking in Discovery Park in Seattle, I unwittingly backed into some stinging nettles. My daughter quickly found two or three slugs and rubbed them on the backs of my legs. The mucus felt like unbeaten egg white, and when it dried it was stiff and could be peeled off easily. Yes, it helped!

It was an old Indian remedy, my daughter told me. These slugs were four to five inches long and looked as though they were wearing Army camouflage outfits.
Betty Piez
Perrysburg, Ohio

Dear Sir: The State of Washington's slug wars are not all underfoot. Thomas Ofner, a true friend of *Limax*, which he

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has memorialized in gold jewelry, wanted to commemorate, in a big way, "every slug that has ever been squashed." So, just before Christmas, he sent a seven-foot gilded Fiberglas slug over the roof and down the facade of his custom jewelry store.

As it appeared to be crawling toward the Dilly Dally, the country store next door, proprietor Nadine Lukoff took action. She put up a four-foot Morton Salt box look-alike, decorated with her logo and tilted toward the golden slug, white streamers erupting from its spout [above]. A horrified Ofner shifted his slug out of harm's way. It all got lots of attention from our local press and TV, and added to the holiday merriment.

Now, the salt box has succumbed to the weather and Mr. Ofner's giant slug, back in its original position, still enlivens Main Street.

Jean K. Scott
Bellevue, Washington

Mall

Dear Sir: The reason for no response to the letter from a poor slave asking President Lincoln whether she was free and what she could do is very clear. Since the slave and her mistress lived in Maryland, which had remained in the Union, she was not covered by the Emancipation Proclamation; it freed all slaves in the Confederacy. A border state with split loyalties, Maryland finally legalized emancipation; until then, slaveholders made their own decisions about freedom.

Annie Davis' mistress evidently had told her she was not yet free, so the letter may have been allowed to gather dust awaiting a definitive answer and then have been forgotten.

Mrs. C. Edward Sparrow jr.
Baltimore, Maryland

Dear Sir: One of the earliest and most significant instances of citizens petitioning the government happened in 1846 when citizens of Virginia asked that the area of the District of Columbia southwest of the Potomac be returned to their state.

In 1801, under Article I of the Constitution, Congress had taken title to a ten-mile-square area ceded by Virginia and Maryland to form the District. But residents of that portion formerly in Virginia became increasingly disenchanted, as most laws authorizing construction of government buildings specified they be built north of the river. The Assembly passed an act agreeing to accept the territory back into Virginia.

A Congressionally authorized referendum was held in September 1846; 763 voted for retrocession and 222 against, and so in March the following year the State of Virginia retrieved its portion of the District of Columbia.

Robert F. Myers
Panama City, Florida

Dear Sir: To the best of my knowledge Fidel Castro was born in 1926. The writer of the letter Mr. Park quoted describes himself as being 12 years old. Are we to believe that Sr. Castro didn't know how old he was in 1940?

C. E. Dougherty
Shawnee, Oklahoma

In the early 1940s an Associated Press reporter in Havana asked Premier Castro about the letter. Castro confirmed that he had written it. "You know, I was audacious then. When the answer came they put it on the bulletin board at school. . . . I was famous . . . because I had an exchange with Roosevelt." Castro's limited knowledge of English at the time may account for the age discrepancy. Ed.

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Flying cars

Dear Sir: I happened to be at the old Harbor Field, in Baltimore, when Robert Fulton arrived in his Airphibian. I watched with great interest as he unbolted propeller, wings and tail, and drove into Baltimore. Fascinated, I followed him in my car until he parked his unusual vehicle in front of one of Baltimore's hotels.
John F. R. Scott jr.
Baltimore, Maryland

Dear Sir: Ford's small aircraft was a conventional single-place lightplane, called the Ford Flivver, not the Sky Car. Two were built; the first one is in the Ford Museum. The second, built to break long-distance records for lightplanes, was the one in which Ford's friend Harry Brooks died. Both were designed by the famous Otto Koppen. A replica is now under construction by the Florida Aviation Historical Society.
N. H. Hauprich
Greensburg, Ohio

Dear Sir: We do have Moulton Taylor's Aerocar in our extensive private collection of antique airplanes at Silverwood, the Northwest's newest turn-of-the-century theme park. However, we are located just north of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, not near Boise.
Stacey Winick Norton
Athol, Idaho

Andy Warhol

Dear Sir: Any red-blooded American of relatively recent vintage can tell you that the painting on page 72 is based on none other than the Venus Paradise pencil set numbering system.

When I mentally insert the colors in their proper places, the painting emerges as a nice, well-balanced composition, slightly on the dark side, as if it were close to sunset or sunrise (but facing away from the sun). In essence, the beauty of this painting is only "visible" to the thousands of us who grew up knowing those numbers so intimately that even now we can gaze at a blank canvas filled with numbers and instantly *see* the picture in all its chromatic splendor. Now *that's* powerful nostalgia.
Douglas Yanega
Lawrence, Kansas

Dear Sir: To refer to the childish banalities of Andy Warhol as "art" illustrates conclusively how far the level of true art in the 20th century has fallen and demonstrates what Friedrich Hayek calls "irremediable ignorance on everyone's part."
Bill Zopf
Jacksonville, Illinois

Phenomena

Dear Sir: In Seaford, East Sussex, the Unigate Company still delivers aluminum-capped glass bottles of nonhomogenized milk to your doorstep, six days a week. The driver also has eggs, orange juice, potatoes and tomatoes, and will even change a light bulb for an elderly customer. Those thieving blue tits are kept away by Ben, our family's West Highland terrier.
Anthony J. Frayne
Seaford, East Sussex

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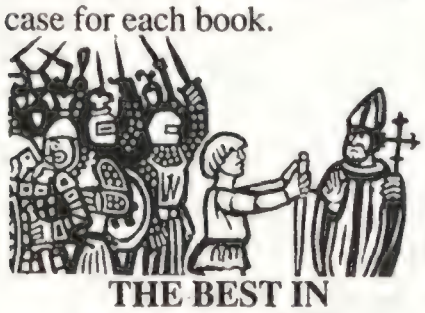

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Around the Mall and beyond

Edwards Park is away this month. Guest columnist Eric Dinerstein, a biologist with the World Wildlife Fund and a visiting research scientist at the Smithsonian, spent four years working in Nepal's Royal Chitwan National Park. He has written previously for the magazine about his experiences there.

When it comes to house cats, the Nepalese don't discriminate. Tabbies, calicoes, Siamese, Persians—they're all bad luck. My driver, Kancha Lama, a man who usually greets life with a broad smile, frowned when I quizzed him about the local status of *Felis catus*. "If a cat crosses the path of our pickup truck, we must stay put until another vehicle passes us. And if it is a black cat, we must not drive on that day. This is a very wicked animal."

Wild cats, on the other hand, inspire awe. Most Nepalese live in mountain villages, close to wooded areas and wild-cat habitat. Even where the dense forests of rhododendron and birch have been cut and only the odd jungle cat survives, the older residents still remember. "Not too long ago," they say, "tigers roamed these hills, killing our livestock and carrying off small children." In the capital, Kathmandu, the suburb of Baneshwar Heights supported a spotted leopard population until the late 1950s, and a young male once meandered into the middle of the old trading bazaar. The ensuing commotion caused rickshaw gridlock and sparked a riot among the pedestrians.

To rural Nepalese, all four large cats native to the kingdom are known as *bagh*. The term is most commonly used to refer to the Bengal tiger, the biggest of the species. At one time it was found

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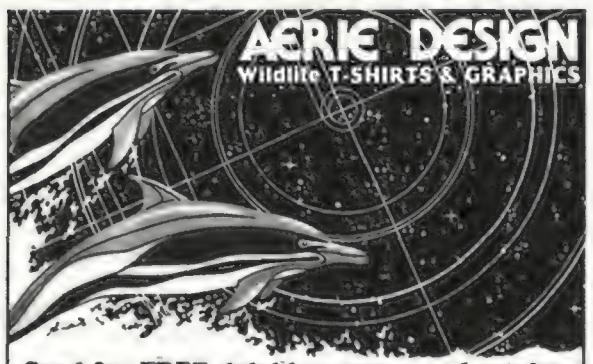

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throughout the lowlands. Today, probably no more than 150 tigers survive. The snow leopard, formerly thought to be on the verge of extinction, remains safe from humanity, tucked away in the inaccessible Himalayan gorges, its numbers unknown. Spotted leopards are ubiquitous, wily survivors that manage to eke out a living in the most degraded of forests. (A friend of mine who is a biologist by training and a cynic by nature is convinced that when all other species vanish from the Earth, spotted leopards will still be here swatting cockroaches.) The rarest of these cats is the clouded leopard, a species found in east India, across Southeast Asia to Borneo and in Taiwan, but one that until recently had not been reported in Nepal for a century.

Not long ago, when I was awakened at 6 A.M. by an out-of-breath villager who told me that a *bagh* had been captured as it raided a local chicken coop, I assumed that he meant a tiger. The owner of the coop had pinned the animal down with a log behind its head, the man explained, and then the creature had been placed inside a crate by the villagers and later brought to our research camp in the park.

It was not unusual for people to drop off injured wild cats; the camp had been the home base for the Smithsonian's cooperative wildlife ecology research with Nepal since the mid-1970s. We were now studying rhinos (SMITHSONIAN, September 1987), but in years past, researchers had captured and radio-collared Bengal tigers. I hurriedly pulled on my clothes but remained skeptical about the villager's story. How, after all, could a 120-pound farmer get the better of a full-grown tiger?

When I saw the size of the crate I realized that if it contained a Bengal tiger, the villagers must have captured a cub. To my amazement, though, I found not a tiger cub but a clouded leopard—the first I had ever seen outside a zoo. This improbable capture raised the possibility that the "official" range of the species extended several hundred miles farther west than scientists had previously believed.

Clouded leopards are endangered, and little is known about their ecology or their behavior in the wild. This one

Named for vivid markings on its sides, rare clouded leopard relaxes on a rock.

on our doorstep, a young male, was the fourth to be reported within the past few months. A pair of cubs and another subadult male had been captured earlier in other locations, a clear sign that at least the remnant of a breeding population remains in Nepal.

Biologists have commonly assumed that these cats survive only in the disappearing band of dense, evergreen tropical forest that stretches from India to Southeast Asia. That they're also hold-

ing on in the scrubby jungles around villages is astonishing to those who study wild carnivores—somewhat like discovering that Donald Trump has sublet his Manhattan penthouse in order to live in the South Bronx.

A sullen prisoner, our cat snarled and spat, exposing a massive set of canines that would do a prehistoric saber-toothed tiger proud. For their size, about 50 pounds at maturity for males, clouded leopards possess the largest canines of any cat. This proud beast had suffered a few abrasions when it was captured and we had to treat those before releasing it.

We sedated the leopard using a drug the family vet employs to tranquilize dogs and cats. Within five minutes our *bagh* was sleepy enough to be dragged out of the crate. We all marveled at the softness of his fur, which was swirled along the sides with a striking pattern of dark clouds.

After measuring him—his impressive tail was almost as long as his 34-inch body—we attached a collar that was rigged with a radio transmitter. We then applied a long-lasting antibiotic to his wounds and put him back inside his crate.

Several hours after he revived from the drug, we fed our guest a chicken and he dispatched it with a swipe of his paw. Until I talked them out of it, members of my staff wanted to feed him a puppy because, they pointed out, village dogs were frequently preyed upon by spotted leopards.

On a steady diet of pullets, the leopard quickly regained his strength while we waited for permission from wildlife officials in Kathmandu to release him. As time dragged on, the main participant in this drama grew more and more restless. At night as I lay in bed on the second floor of my jungle hut, I could hear the cat's deep growl as he paced in his cage on the floor below. Finally, three days after he was brought to camp, one week after he tried to steal a farmer's chickens, official word filtered down to us. The national zoo already had a pair of clouded leopards, therefore this one could be returned to the wild. The only condition was that it had to be released inside the park.

Early the next morning we loaded the crate and its snarling occupant onto the bed of our pickup truck and headed for the release site. Within a half-hour we arrived at a riverine forest of evergreen wild avocado and fig trees. We lifted the crate out of the truck and opened the door, expecting the leopard to leap out immediately.

Nothing happened.

We tried clapping our hands and throwing sticks at the crate. The leopard still refused to budge.

Finally, we tried lifting the crate off the animal, a trick we had pulled once before on a stubborn rhino. When we winched the crate up this time, however, the leopard simply climbed up inside and held on.

Minutes passed. Still no sign of movement. At last, the leopard seemed to tire and slid to the edge of the door. He crawled out and under the crate, which was suspended several feet off the ground, and remained motionless there—as if ready to pounce.

One of our elephant drivers picked up a stick and hit the leopard on the hindquarters, whereupon it bounded into the undergrowth to loud and sustained applause. The squawking of wild

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jungle fowl and peacocks, startled by the arrival of a new predator, clearly marked the route the leopard had taken. After a few hours of rest for the cat and our crew, we climbed onto our elephants and began to follow the radio signal emanating from the transmitter on the animal's collar.

Students of wildlife biology are warned early about the temptation to attribute human emotions and attitudes to the animals they study—a sin usually referred to as anthropomorphism—but I couldn't help wondering what was going through that leopard's mind as we spent the following days radio-tracking him. For all we knew, he might have sensed, from the lack of tracks, droppings and scent of his own kind, that he was exploring new terrain.

The leopard kept moving west, and so did we. During the second week, radio contact became infrequent. The cat had gone up into the hills. After nine more days, during which I was unable to pick up any signal at all, Gyan Bahadur, my elephant driver, sensed that I still wanted to press on. With a broad sweep of his hand, the old mahout uttered what I already knew to be true, *"Ahh, gayo, gayo, Saheb, gaisakyo!"* (Gone, gone, Sir, already gone!), and turned our elephant homeward.

Many Asian Buddhists place great faith in the release of captive wildlife as an act that purifies the soul. Cultural values aside, few things give more satisfaction to anyone who reveres wildlife than treating an injured wild animal and returning it to nature. Such had been our privilege. But our encounter with that beautiful creature also gave us professional satisfaction. For two weeks we had been able to track him daily. It was the first time that biologists had monitored the movements of a free-ranging clouded leopard.

The fate of this particular cat remains unclear. Perhaps it was killed by a tiger before it could find a safe haven. Perhaps it is still wandering in the Churia Hills of Chitwan, looking for a mate. Any one of a number of things could have happened to it. As for me, I am left with the image of a lone clouded leopard stalking across the forest floor. Now and then he pauses to scrape the earth and mark with urine at the junction of two deer trails, charting what may be virgin territory in his species' atlas of modern Asia.

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Phenomena, comment and notes

After half a million cigarettes comes the chance to write a science story from the point of view of the patient

Back in my glory days as a science writer, I wrote the occasional medical breakthrough story along with tales of subatomic particles, astronomical discoveries and all the rest of "hard" science. To a young reporter, they were all the same: news stories with the added challenge of explaining just what it was you were talking about. Describing how surgeons slithered a balloon pump for a failing heart up an artery and into position was no different from explaining what happened in the racetrack we then called an atom smasher.

Today I know that there ought to be a law: never write about something until it happens to you. My first clue came a decade ago. During the energy crisis, we ran a story about heating with firewood. At the time I thought it was a great idea; a public service to encourage people to heat with a renewable resource. Then the lawyers who were holding the 65 acres behind my Maryland house had the land timbered. That wasn't so bad. The holes in the canopy were probably a plus for the local wildlife, and I thought the "road" would heal. Next the lawyers invited the neighbors in to cut firewood. In no time a stretch of creek where great blue herons had once stalked by day and great horned owls had hunted by night looked like the site of a major tank battle. For a long time I could not bring myself to walk back there.

Twenty years after blithely writing stories about running catheters up people's arteries to their hearts, I have watched one invade my own. I have lain helpless on a table and watched on a screen as a tube thin as a wire works its way up my body to my heart, squirting dye like some irritable microcephalopod as it advances, finally spewing its inkiness into the left ventricle of my heart. The x-ray camera moves up and down my body, dancing from side to side in semicircular arcs like an automated life-form analyzer aboard an alien spaceship. When the cath lab crew shoves on my groin to move the catheter, I go rigid with pain, at least until the fourth or fifth syringe of anesthetic. The dye feels like hot salt water washing through my body. Coronary arteries look like downed power lines thrashing about in a storm. Until the dye reaches it, the heart itself is invisible; as it expands and contracts the arteries dance like Maypole ropes moved by invisible dancers. It is nothing whatsoever like being at a press conference or sitting at a typewriter back at the office. Not only is the whole procedure uncomfortable, the lab director has carefully explained to me that one possible side effect from this routine angiogram is death.

Strange but friendly faces from many parts of the world lean over me, telling me that I am lucky, that in up to half of all cases of heart disease the first symptom is death. They have a lot to say about my smoking, about how nicotine causes the walls of coronary arteries to spasm, how it makes blood "stickier" and thus causes it to clot, how it depresses the HDL or "good" cholesterol. I ask if they resent spending their days trying to save victims of self-inflicted disease—people like me who have smoked and eaten and lazed their way into the coronary care unit. Not the first time around, they tell me. It is only when a discharged patient goes back to the same old habits and ends up right back in the hospital that they begin to lose interest.

It is hard to explain to the pure of lung why anyone smokes in this day and age. The smoker knows better than anyone about lung cancer, emphysema, heart disease, gangrene in the extremities, sexual impotence—the whole dreary litany. The smoker knows all about social opprobrium, burned clothes, the fear that his house is on fire right now because he left a cigarette going.

Two months before my heart attack, it became harder for me to explain. A

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routine visit to the doctor turned up what look like spiderwebs in my lungs, a filigree of scar tissue that leaves the lungs too stiff for the diaphragm to assume its natural shape. (For a long time I assumed that the x ray was not mine at all but only one the doctor had bought from a supply house to scare smokers; now I'm not so sure.) The condition is what doctors fetchingly call chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or COPD, a permanent loss of lung function.

A return visit for a stress test went no better. After a few minutes I had to jump off the treadmill, not for any pain in my chest or even because I was winded, but because a pain in my leg—a pain I have felt for years whenever I walk uphill—was now excruciating. I had assumed it was the pain of a middle-aged man who is totally out of shape. Not so, replied the doctor. It comes from smoking. The arteries in my legs are constricted, making me limp. Claudication, they call it.

Why keep smoking? Why, for that matter, have I spent that $20,000 for those 525,000 cigarettes? The short answer is that nicotine is the best all-around psychoactive drug on the market today. It gets you going, keeps you going, then relaxes you when you are ready. Smokers know that, but does the rest of the world really understand?

To the rescue comes Neal L. Benowitz, a medical doctor in the Clinical Pharmacology Unit at San Francisco General Hospital Medical Center, writing in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. He describes how fast nicotine gets to the brain, lists the "feel-good" neurotransmitters and hormones it releases. Benowitz says that in abstaining smokers, nicotine can improve "attention, learning, reaction time and problem solving" —everything a person could want. It is hard to know whether the improvement in performance and mood comes from the relief of withdrawal symptoms or from an "intrinsic enhancement effect on the brain," he adds, but at least some studies show the performance of nonsmokers improving after taking nicotine tablets, evidence for direct enhancement.

There's more: ". . . nicotine has been shown to increase vigilance in the performance of repetitive tasks and to enhance selective attention. Smokers commonly report pleasure and reduced anger, tension, depression, and stress." Not bad for a drug that is legal, cheap, widely available, easy to take and—at least for the longtime addict—tastes good. Imagine the director of research for some huge corporation who reports a find like that to his CEO.

Of course, there are those pesky drawbacks. It was one morning last November, the day before the Benowitz paper was published, that I was sitting at my desk, drinking coffee, smoking cigarettes, polishing sentences in a story for the next issue. A feeling of disengagement came over me, as though parts of my body were separating from one another, or my body and mind were going in different directions. Then a pain developed high in my chest, as though someone were holding a sharp pencil to my heart and pushing harder and harder. Pain spread across my chest; my left arm went numb. I tried doubling over; I tried leaning back; I tried imagining myself in a boat on

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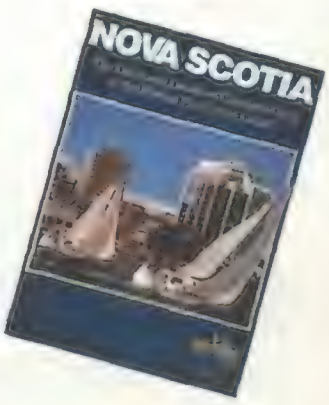

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Long Island Sound on a summer morning; the pain kept coming. As would 1.5 million other Americans last year, I was having a heart attack.

Later the attending cardiologist runs the angiogram film for me. The picture is black and white, jerky; the leaping arteries look like something you might see through a microscope. He stops the film to show me the circumflex artery, one of the secondary vessels that supply blood to the heart muscle itself. It looks to my eye as though a square notch has been cut out of it. I am looking at stenosis, a blockage, a place where plaque has built up on the side of the artery, cutting off 50 to 70 percent of the blood supply to one portion of my heart. It is this section that closed completely, either because it spasmed or because the plaque cracked and a clot formed. It is this one little spot in all the miles of blood vessels in my body that has me eating twigs instead of bacon and eggs, and keeping burglar's hours, out walking before sunrise and also when honest people have gone to bed. It is that one little spot, and the pencil-point pain it produced when I tried a cigarette after the hospital, that has me off the evil weed at last.

Three months later the excitement, the special attention, is over. This old body will never be the same, though. After 90 days without a cigarette, red blood cells are carrying oxygen again instead of carbon monoxide. Cilia, tiny hairs that line healthy throats, are breaking through the scar tissue in mine like weed trees coming up through the broken asphalt of an abandoned parking lot, ready once again to sweep away dust, dirt, soot from diesel engines, droplets of unburned jet fuel falling from the sky. Blood vessels that had been tightened down for years are relaxing, widening; climbing hills does not hurt anymore. The heart is working less and enjoying life more.

Some changes are unsettling. When you have not regularly breathed through your nose since the Dodgers played in Brooklyn and then start again, you feel like a new hole has opened in your head. You can smell the world around you once again; some is pleasant, some is decidedly not—how do dogs stand it? You face the prospect of no longer being able to lie around at home half the winter with the flu.

What if my immune system becomes bored? Will it miss the challenge of arsenic, carbolic acid, pesticide residues heated to hundreds of degrees? What is a body to do without its customary 40 doses a day of acetone, ammonia, benzene, boron, cadmium, creosol, DDT, endrin, formaldehyde, hydrogen cyanide, radioactive lead, mercury, methane, methyl alcohol, nitric oxide and the other 3,000 or so compounds present in cigarette smoke?

All the news is good, and yet. . . I still feel as though someone dear has died, as though I am swimming underwater and am desperate to take a breath. The urgency is permanent, like the sensation of falling that an astronaut has hour after hour, day after day. Something is wrong, something is missing. Every day I prove, in reverse, all the effects Dr. Benowitz found: I cannot think, cannot remember, cannot concentrate. The only thing more difficult than writing without smoking, I now discover, is to write about smoking without smoking. I am tapping along at 500 calories per paragraph: crackers, candy, cake, bread and jelly, soup, leftovers, anything a grazer can find.

In a recurring fantasy, it is night. I am sitting on the curb outside an emergency room. An open bottle of nitroglycerin tablets is at my side, in case a coronary artery spasms. When things seem to be calm inside the swinging doors, when that whole team of highly trained medical professionals is just waiting for something to happen, I take out a cigarette, light it, draw in deeply, more deeply. . . In the fantasy, it is like mainlining Valium.

The books say you can expect about 48 hours of physical withdrawal symptoms: headaches, irritability, that sort of thing. I can report that in a scientific sample of one, the irritability continues for at least 90 days. It would not be a good idea right now for me to be at a press conference at which a tobacco spokesman asserts that cigarettes are not addictive, that a smoker can quit any time he or she decides to. I just might drop my notebook, gulp down a calcium-channel blocker or two, and then dispute that position. As Dr. Benowitz might say, I would attempt to destabilize the gentleman's electroencephalographic state. The spokesman could then write his story about hospitals, and I could write mine about jail.

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Headed for Victoria, weather-beaten junk from the Chinese mainland plows waters off Hong Kong Island.

By Stanley Karnow

What will happen when the Chinese take back their 'fragrant harbor'?

Though no longer a common sight here, for centuries boats like this carried most of the coastwise trade.

Hong Kong, lavish bastion of free enterprise ceded to Great Britain in the 19th century, will revert to the People's Republic in 1997

"Ten years is an eternity here. I can maybe triple my fortune during that time. Then I'll see what's happening and decide what to do."

My Chinese friend, a businessman, sounds supremely confident as we sit in his club, 50 floors above the ground, looking out at a tiny British colony perched on the rim of China. With Hong Kong scheduled to revert to the People's Republic of China in 1997, I had asked him to ponder what will happen when the world's most celebrated bastion of unbridled capitalism eventually comes under Communist rule. Predictably, the conversation focuses on how much money he can amass between now and then, and perhaps thereafter. Conversations here have focused on money ever since the British acquired the property, one of the world's great harbors, from China during the 19th century.

Money talks everywhere. In Hong Kong it speaks with commanding authority; nothing else matters.

As a foreign correspondent during the 1960s, I sensed the gathering momentum of Hong Kong's subsequent boom. But I never dreamed that this borrowed place, living on borrowed time, would eventually become one of the most prosperous corners of the Earth. Returning, I feel a bit like Rip Van Winkle. It is hard to believe the astonishing transformation the Crown Colony has undergone during the 15 years since I left.

A child's Erector Set fantasy

Soaring skyscrapers now dwarf the silhouette of my memory. The new Hongkong and Shanghai Bank building is among the world's most expensive corporate headquarters—a child's Erector Set fantasy of tubes and girders modeled on the Pompidou Center in Paris and completed at a cost of a cool $1 billion. Close by stand the curvilinear towers of Exchange Square, a colossal office complex made of American glass and German steel, serviced by Japanese air conditioners and Swiss elevators. Sicilian marble fixtures adorn its toilets, and its piazza features a Henry Moore sculpture near an artificial cascade, thus evoking the Cantonese word *shui*—which, depending on one's intonation, means either "water" or "money." Tallest of all is the local seat of the Bank of China, an aluminum sheath designed by celebrated Chinese-American architect I. M. Pei. It is the Chinese government's official financial institution, and the 70 stories are plainly intended to dramatize China's forthcoming ascendancy—as well as its desire to grab a larger share of Hong Kong's profits. Notably gone is the old Cricket Club, once an exclusive carpet of green in the heart of town, now the site of a public square.

Money is still fueling a relentless construction frenzy. Downtown districts resonate to the whir of cranes and the staccato of jackhammers as workers, dizzily climb-

At Club Volvo, hostesses charge by the minute for a chat; clients ride to their booths in electric cars.

Wealthy barrister Brenda Chau can color-coordinate her fur coats to match the family's two Rolls-Royces.

By agreement, Chinese will permit bourgeois pleasures like horse racing for at least 50 years after takeover.

Terraces crowded with sparkling towers make view from Victoria Peak one of the world's most spectacular.

ing spindly webs of bamboo scaffolding, build on every inch—including 14 square miles reclaimed from the harbor. Despite threats of trade retaliation from American and European competitors, Hong Kong manufacturers are putting up new textile, garment and electronics plants, toy factories, shipyards. Another airport and additional harbor tunnels are being contemplated, all as private ventures. The colony now rivals Manhattan, Tokyo and London as a global financial center, its computers converting and transferring millions in various currencies every minute.

Proportionately, there are more Rolls-Royces in Hong Kong than in Beverly Hills. Fancy stores blaze with Gucci, Hermès and Louis Vuitton labels, though comparison shoppers can buy the same—or indistinguishable counterfeits—at bargain prices in narrow alleys, where peddlers also hawk everything from rare celadon and antique porcelains to sweaters, ties, tennis rackets and golf balls, wigs and transistor radios—all made in the colony. Food markets overflow with such

Across the harbor are Kowloon and New Territories, on the Chinese mainland, with the People's Republic just beyond. Since the 1960s, emphasis on free market and profit motive has fueled a construction frenzy.

things as lacquered ducks, lobsters and freshwater crabs from the Chang River (formerly the Yangtze). Sweating cooks toss up pungent dishes at open-air counters near stands and shops piled with ginger, coriander and ginseng, and supposed aphrodisiacs like powdered rhinoceros horn and snake bile, which rejuvenates when laced with *kaoliang*, a fiery liquor distilled from sorghum.

During my earlier era, the best Chinese restaurants were gaudy, boisterous places, mostly patronized by merchants and brokers in shirtsleeves. Many of them, I discovered sadly, have been renovated to suit stylish young Chinese customers who prefer tablecloths, soft lights, canned music and waiters in black ties. Money, clearly, has spawned a middle class.

Seeing all this I am reminded that I may be one of the few people who failed to strike it rich in Hong Kong. The abortive venture was a Broadway delicatessen entitled Lindy's East, conceived by a group of Americans and Chinese who believed that the colony

was panting for hot pastrami on rye. We flew in gallons of borscht, barrels of pickles and tons of bread, but all too soon we were our only customers, the founding partners literally eating up the profits. In retrospect, it is clear, Hong Kong was not yet ready for matzo balls and stuffed derma—as it would be today in its new ambience of affluent sophistication. How bagels and lox may fare under the Communists in the 21st century is a matter of speculation.

Hong Kong's destiny was determined in 1982, when Britain's Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, visited Beijing (Peking). In a talk with Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping, she raised the subject of the colony's future, which hinged on a 99-year lease imposed on China by imperial Britain in 1898. Mrs. Thatcher was under pressure from the Hong Kong business community, which detests uncertainty. The bankers needed to know, for example, how long they could stretch out their loans. Deng bluntly told her that China would assert its sovereignty over Hong Kong on deadline—July 1, 1997. After long, tense negotiations, it was agreed that the Crown Colony will become a "Special Administrative Region" of China on that date. But exactly what that will mean in practice is still obscure.

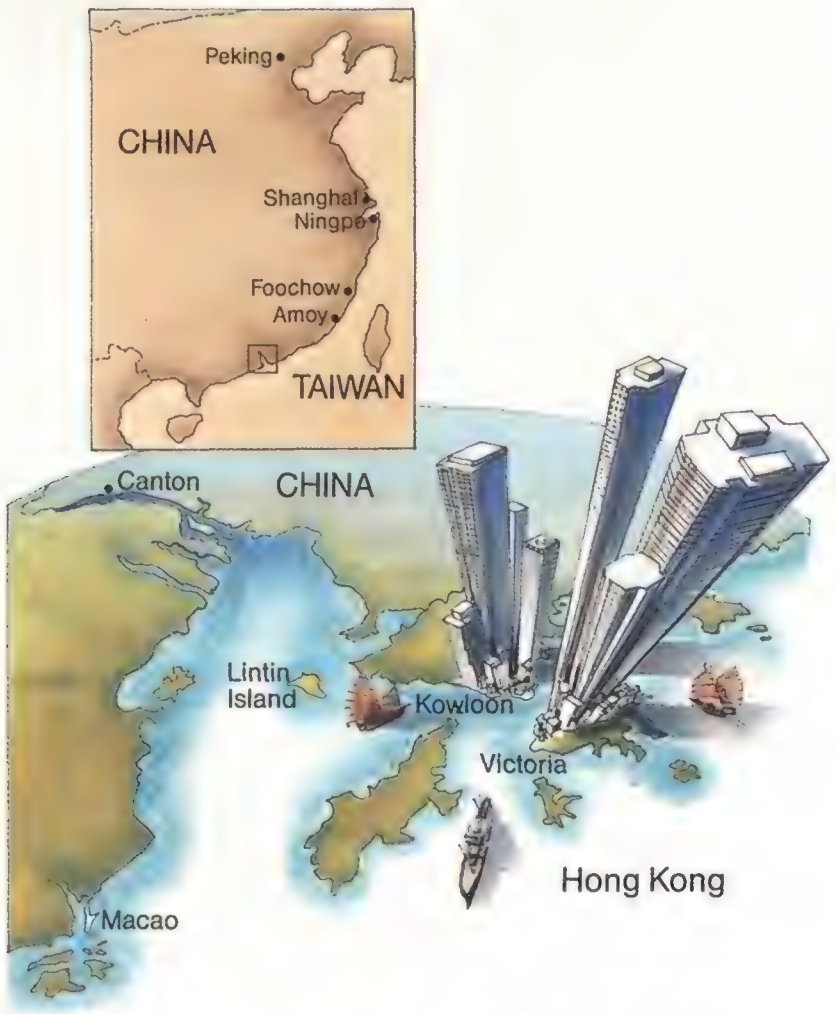
Ever since the agreement was made, Deng and his

In 1793, Emperor Qianlong received a British envoy with ingratiating pomp but rebuffed his trade requests.

comrades have been striving to reassure Hong Kong's more than five million Chinese residents, many of them refugees from Communism. Deng's "Special Administrative" formula, "one country, two systems," is a pledge that, for at least 50 years after the 1997 takeover, China will respect the colony's laws, free enterprise traditions and style of life. The Chinese have intimated as well that such bourgeois diversions as horse racing will be permitted. The accord contains disturbing clauses, however, including one that authorizes China to station troops in Hong Kong. The real question is whether the Chinese, with their history of bureaucratic rigidity compounded by Communist doctrine, can really adjust to unalloyed capitalism. Under the British, Hong Kong has operated on the Jeffersonian theory that the best government governs least. China, on the other hand, functioned for 2,000 years on the principle that the policies of the emperor and his mandarins were inviolate.

Optimists argue that China cannot afford to upset Hong Kong, which serves as its main source of hard currency and its gateway to international banking and modern technology. And China itself now seems to be going through too many liberal reforms to turn the clock back to the rigors of Maoist revolutionary dogma. A country that has eagerly adopted Coca-Cola and the international credit card, this thesis goes, is not going to repress Hong Kong's free enterprise. The colony's long-range hope, indeed, is that its brand of capitalism will seep into China so that ultimately, one diplomat told me, "the tail wags the dog."

That trend is already visible in Guangzhou (Can-



The colony of Hong Kong, composed of a mainland peninsula and many adjacent islands, grew out of 19th-century opium trade; inset shows 1842 treaty ports.

By 1840, Westerners thrived; yet their warehouses, or "factories," were confined to one district in Canton.

Dismissed by Lord Palmerston as a "barren rock," by the 1850s Hong Kong was booming with foreign trade.

ton), a provincial capital that has lately acquired the best and worst ways of Hong Kong. Foreign companies, allowed to sell goods there, have begun to whet an appetite for Western luxuries in the city's formerly insulated population. Residents with money to spend have shed their drab Mao suits for more colorful clothes, and are purchasing imported refrigerators and TVs. But free market liberalization has also brought in raucous nightclubs, glitzy dance halls, cinemas showing "adult" films, as well as swindlers and smugglers.

The political behavior of the People's Republic is highly unpredictable, however. Radical zealots there are always lurking in the wings, ready to exploit any pretext for a savage ideological crackdown. Despite his economic reforms, Deng Xiaoping has censured Chinese intellectuals for favoring increased political freedom. A similar danger might face Hong Kong if whoever succeeds to power proves intractably Communist.

Equally crucial is the reaction of Hong Kong's population to China's rule. The superrich, as usual, have no cause to worry. Their exemplar, Sir Yue-kong Pao, is a billionaire whose holdings include hotels, electronics plants, shopping centers, insurance companies and a fleet of freighters. A few years ago, after taking control of Wheelock Marden, one of Hong Kong's venerable British trading firms, he plastered his office with photographs of himself with Queen Elizabeth and Margaret Thatcher. Prudently, however, he also befriended Deng Xiaoping and donates millions to educational projects in China. "I have confidence in Hong Kong as the best place to put money," he says.

In reality though, as a cushion against the possibility of disaster, Pao and other Hong Kong fat cats have money stashed away all over the world. The phenomenal rise in California real estate values, for instance, mirrors their protective investments.

The very poor, as usual, have no choice. The hints of worry and discomfort now visible are mainly among the new Chinese managerial class—skilled accountants, lawyers, engineers, technicians and computer whizzes who have spurred Hong Kong's initiative and innovation. Many claim to be unperturbed. "The Communists will need managers," one of them explains. "They cannot dispense with our services." Many also are stirred by a certain national pride; benign as British rule has been, it did intrude upon China's sacred soil. Virtually all, however, are considering some future asylum—Brazil, Mexico, even the Pacific islands of Tonga. Some send their children abroad to clinch foreign citizenship—and a possible escape route.

Politics is their main concern. "Freedom without democracy" has long been Hong Kong's unofficial motto, reflecting the belief that fiercely partisan politics interfere with economic prosperity. But some spokesmen for the middle classes, troubled by what could lie ahead, have lately been clamoring for elections to choose a strong local administration to be in place when the Chinese march in. Such an administration, in their view, would guarantee Hong Kong's

Longtime Asia correspondent Stanley Karnow's book In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines *has just been published by Random House. His PBS documentary TV series on that country will air in May.*

Scotsman William Jardine, called "iron-headed rat" by Chinese, foresaw huge profits in the opium trade.

autonomy under Chinese rule. The British are trying to put a damper on political agitation so as not to displease Beijing, thus retreating from Hong Kong with grace and dignity. All they can really do is hope that the Chinese will remain true to their pledge to govern the colony with a light hand.

The Crown Colony of Hong Kong came about nearly a century and a half ago, through the collision of an aloof and suspicious China with the "barbarian" world beyond its borders. Until 1685, Western traders were restricted to the Portuguese enclave of Macao, 75 miles south of Canton.

That year the powerful Qing dynasty emperor, Kangxi, persuaded that an increase of commerce might benefit him, invited them to set up shop in Canton itself, then a sprawling city of more than a million people, many of them jammed into sampans along its riverfront. The Westerners, confined to a ghetto outside the city walls, put up offices and warehouses known as "factories." The district drew crowds of peddlers and beggars eager to bilk the "foreign devils," and inquisitive onlookers came to stare at the peculiar strangers with big noses and ruddy faces.

Westerners were forbidden to bring their families with them, to this first toehold on Chinese territory. They were also denied access to the inner city and even barred from pleasure boating lest they drift off-limits. They could only deal with a guild of Chinese contractors, the Gonghang, which represented the emperor and collected customs duties for the Haiquan Bu, or customs superintendent, in distant Peking. Foreigners nicknamed him Hu-pu, and eventually Hoppo.

The system was venal, arbitrary, often cruel. The contractors simply squeezed Western traders for all they could get, kicking back a percentage to the Hoppo, from whom they bought their lucrative appointments. The Hoppo, whose job carried no salary, in turn paid off his superiors and sent remittances to the imperial court.

The Son of Heaven says "No"

By the late 18th century, the British, leading the way into the Industrial Revolution, began to seek broader export markets. China, whose silk and tea they coveted, was an obvious client. But trade beyond the narrow aperture of Canton was anathema to the Chinese. In 1793, hoping to change their minds, Britain sent Lord Macartney on a mission to the court of Emperor Qianlong.

The exalted Son of Heaven welcomed Macartney in a splendid ceremony and deigned to accept a letter in Latin from King George III describing the advantages of trade with Britain. Exhorting the British monarch to "act in conformity with our wishes by strengthening

In decisive moment of first Opium War, Chinese war junks defending Canton are blasted by British fleet including the paddlewheeler *Nemesis* (background, right). China soon surrendered, giving up Hong Kong.

your loyalty and swearing perpetual obedience" to the Celestial Empire, the emperor rebuffed Macartney. China, he said, had "no need of the manufactures of outside Barbarians."

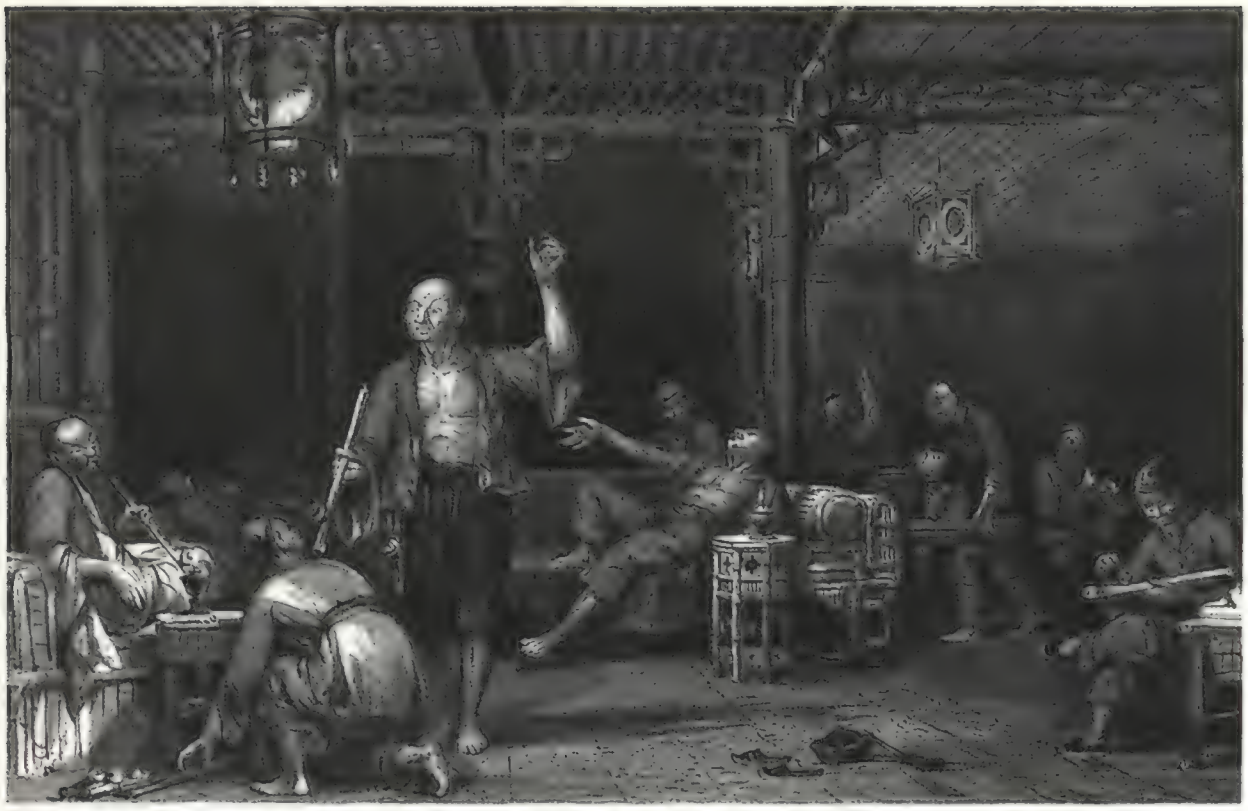
The British public, however, wanted Chinese tea; fortunately—at least for them—Britain's traders could also offer opium, cultivated in India. The Chinese called the drug *yan*—a word that entered the English language as "yen." By the early 1800s, despite the emperor's attitude, the opium trade was thriving.

British opium merchants justified the traffic by arguing that they were only satisfying the market. They also observed that Chinese officials avidly collaborated in the business. The most aggressive of these merchants were William Jardine and James Matheson, both from Scotland. Jardine, a doctor in training, was a tough nut whom the Chinese deferentially dubbed the "iron-headed rat." In his office, he allowed only one chair, his own, forcing visitors to stand. Perhaps more enlightened, Matheson, a baronet, had the only piano in Canton. He also paid tutors to teach proper English to young Chinese, most of whom dealt with Westerners in pidgin.

For them both, opium was an ideal commodity—imperishable and extremely profitable. By 1839, a 133-pound chest of it (the standard measure) fetched as much as a thousand silver dollars. But there were complications. After arriving from India, it would be held in storage ships at Lintin Island (now Neilingdingdao), then moved upriver to Canton (see map, page 44). Ramshackle Chinese Navy junks, their gongs clanging and cannon firing, often feigned pursuit of the British opium ships—a charade enabling provincial mandarins to display their zeal to the emperor.

Jardine and Matheson began to circumvent this tiresome masquerade by plying other places along the coast, where smuggling was easier and local Chinese officials were just as corruptible. In doing so, the partners relied heavily on Karl Friedrich Gutzlaff, a Lutheran missionary of Prussian origin, who spoke several Chinese dialects. He used the voyages to distribute evangelical literature, often passing out tracts from one side of the ship while opium was being off-loaded from the other. By opening China, he wrote, the drug traffic "may tend ultimately to the introduction of the gospel."

The Chinese denounced the traffic as immoral, but were outraged only when the balance of trade shifted



Opium dens, called divans, led to ruin of many Chinese during years when British shipped in "black smoke" by the ton from India. Although local merchants profited greedily, Chinese officials protested. In a letter to Queen Victoria, one of them pointedly asked how "profit by exposing others to its malific power can be reconciled with the decrees of Heaven?"

against them. One of their awkward attempts to halt opium sales became a turning point in history. In March 1839, Lin Zexu, a mandarin sent by the emperor to tame the barbarians, ordered the British merchants to surrender "every particle" of their opium and to cease the illicit traffic forever. Then Lin barred all foreigners from leaving Canton, in effect holding them hostage. The British naval officer in charge of the area, Charles Elliot, promptly advised British merchants to hand over 20,000 chests of opium to Lin, and since he had also promised to reimburse them at the prevailing price, nobody quibbled. Besides, they knew a temporary shortage would boost the value of the drug. The Chinese contractors interpreted the size of Elliot's concession as a sign of naiveté. As they put it in pidgin: "What for he pay so large? No wantee so much. Six, seven thousand so would be enough."

Lin sent a reproachful and elegant Confucian essay in the form of a letter to 20-year-old Queen Victoria. "We have heard that in your honourable barbarian country the people are not permitted to inhale the drug," he wrote. "If it is admittedly so deleterious, how can to seek profit by exposing others to its malific power be reconciled with the decrees of Heaven?"

Assuming that he had prevailed, Lin let the British leave Canton. Elliot, fearing further trouble, evacuated British citizens to ships anchored 90 miles away in a strait known as Hong Kong, or "fragrant harbor," located near a nameless island clad in scrub vegetation. The hapless Lin, who, except for opium, favored commerce with the West, now began to fear that the foreign traders were irretrievably gone. Foolishly he tried to force them back into his fold by threatening to have his fleet fire on their vessels. Elliot's handful of ships fired first, routing the 29 Chinese junks in less than an hour, but Lin's admiral reported it as a victory, with some losses, and was decorated for valor. The first Opium War—more grandly called the first Anglo-China War—was off and running.

British reinforcements arrived from India in June 1840. They attacked China's coastal cities and threatened Peking. After China sued for peace, the emperor agreed to reopen Canton to foreign trade and cede Hong Kong to Great Britain—along with an indemnity of 21 million silver dollars.

A final accord, signed in Nanking (now Nanjing) in August 1842, gave Britain more than control of Hong Kong: henceforth, China would be open to the West. All foreign merchants could trade and reside under their own laws and officials in the so-called "treaty ports" of Canton, Amoy (Xiamen), Foochow (Fuzhou), Ningpo (Ningbo) and Shanghai. Still, neither side was happy with the war's outcome. Peking banished the mandarin who negotiated the accord to Tibet. Queen Victoria punished Elliot by sending him to the Republic of Texas as chargé d'affaires.

Though Hong Kong's first governor, Sir Henry Pottinger, predicted that the new colony would become "a vast Emporium of commerce and wealth" within six months, Lord Palmerston dismissed the place as a "barren rock." In Britain generally, Hong Kong was regarded as a joke or worse. Proper Victorians, loath to use such blasphemous terms as "hell," invented the euphemism "Go to Hong Kong." A contemporary book on China spoke of its "Utter Worthlessness from Every Point of View."

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Stock Exchange banished yelling and waving bidders by totally computerizing its trading floor in 1986.

But directed from Hong Kong, the opium traffic flourished as never before. By the 1860s, at least 2,000 vessels a year were thronging to its huge harbor. Companies moved in to refurbish ships of many nations, sell insurance and extend loans. British law, order and administration made the colony a secure and stable shelter amid the turbulence of Asia. Exporting opium from India to China was banned by Britain in 1913 but the trade continued. The profits rolled in, bringing a stream of transient Western adventurers, once described by Leonard Woolf as "those louche but plausible international crooks who used to drift like the spores of some contagious disease from one Asiatic city to another." Typical was David de Mayréna, a Frenchman who appeared in 1888 in a Ruritanian uniform, claiming to be the "King of the Sedangs." Accompanied by a voluptuous demimondaine, whom he introduced as his queen, he gulled local businessmen into investing in his mythical realm—until the French consul unmasked him as an imposter. Fleeing to Malaya he launched a scheme to sell birds' nests for soup and then died of a snakebite.

Close to a largely hostile China and far from home, the few thousand Westerners in Hong Kong should have clung together. Instead, obsessed with status, they scratched and clawed one another, angling for invitations to the governor's mansion. Atop the social ladder were senior government people, ranking army officers and the heads of the big Western firms, known as taipans. Social life centered around clubs, whose members spent the late afternoon sipping sundowners and exchanging gossip.

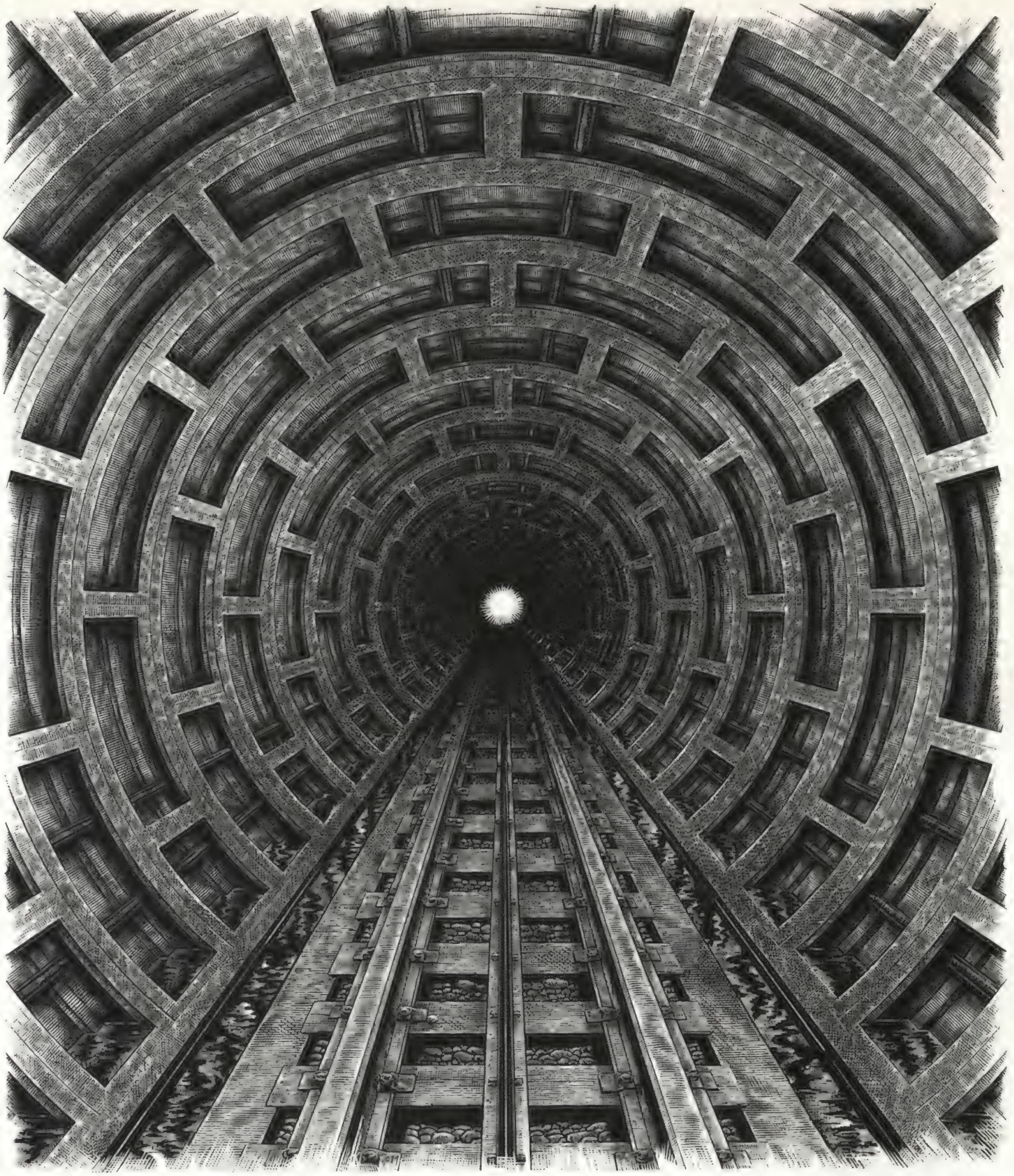
The Westerners, mainly middle class in origin, perpetuated certain racial barriers. (Only lately has intermarriage between Westerners and Chinese become socially acceptable.) They belonged to the Hong Kong Club or lived on the Peak, both off-limits to Asians. Few dealt with the Chinese at all, socially, and they rarely learned to speak Chinese, relying on pidgin instead. A liberal governor in the 1880s, Sir John Pope-Hennessy, irked his compatriots by proposing the Chinese be allowed to use the public library. Though the Chinese created an equally rigid class structure, their status depended almost entirely on their relationship with Europeans. When employed by Western firms, they usually started as compradors, the fixers who supervised local employees and unraveled red tape.

Speculating on the basis of inside information, many became stupendously rich. The British often esteemed and even honored them, but social caste excluded them from more than second-class citizenship. A highly respected figure around the turn of the century, for instance, was Wei Yuk, the son of a wealthy comprador. Educated in Britain, he returned to the colony to follow his father in the service of the British bank and was eventually knighted, thereby becoming one of the "King's Chinese," as such notables were called. But he was never invited to the Hong Kong Club or allowed to reside on the Peak.

Until World War II, Hong Kong was a pleasant backwater, successfully practicing "freedom without democracy," but certainly no match for Shanghai with its intrigue, excitement and cosmopolitan ambience. On Christmas Day 1941, the colony's complacency was shattered when the Japanese overpowered its British garrison. Anticipating disaster, two-thirds of the colony's Chinese population of 1.6 million fled. Port facilities fell into disrepair and warehouses lay empty. During their occupation, the Japanese had ordered the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank to issue worthless paper money.

Refugees from Communism streamed in

After the liberation, the bank and the government redeemed every last penny at an estimated cost of $30 million. Confidence rebounded; the colony's docks soon bustled with commerce. The boom continued after the Communists took over China in 1949. They went on a buying spree to rebuild their war-torn country, importing everything from raw materials to medicine and machinery, and Hong Kong handled the bulk of the trade. Through the '50s and '60s, refugees from Communism streamed into Hong Kong, swelling its population to nearly four million in 1966, and creating huge unemployment, a housing shortage and health problems. The colony might have foundered had it not been for the flexibility of its Chinese entrepreneurs—



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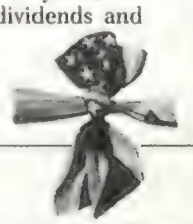

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who saw the need for change—and the talents of its British civil service, which promoted laissez-faire policies to foster economic growth.

Old Cantonese clans, preeminent in banking and money lending, and awash with flight capital from elsewhere in Asia, found themselves able to underwrite new ventures. Newcomers from Shanghai, who had fled the Communists, were experienced manufacturers. They brought cash and skill, helping to trigger an industrial revolution. Statistics dramatize the change. In 1949, Hong Kong had only 1,280 factories employing roughly 65,000. By 1966, there were more than 9,000 factories and a labor force of 377,000.

Opportunities abounded. Consider the case of Lo Fung, once a worker in a plastics plant. He saved his money and in the '50s bought an injection-molding device, rented a room in an empty apartment and began his own business making radio cases on the strength of a slim contract with a U.S. company, obtained through a cousin. He soon graduated to manufacturing radios, then went into video games. When we last met in 1963, he was one of Hong Kong's foremost exporters of consumer electronic equipment to Western Europe.

One reason many Hong Kong people distrust Communist China goes back to the mid-'60s, when Mao Zedong's convulsive Cultural Revolution swept into Hong Kong from the mainland. As in China itself—where professors were forced to become plowmen overnight, more than a million were killed and hundreds of irreplaceable temples were demolished—young Red Guards rampaged through Hong Kong's streets, staging demonstrations, shouting slogans and skirmishing with police. Pragmatic leaders in Beijing, mindful of Hong Kong's value, brought the situation under control there. But many alarmed Hong Kong Chinese fled at the time, selling their property cheap to hardier souls who reaped fortunes when prices soared later.

China itself took advantage of such bargains to begin investing in the colony. Today its holdings there amount to an estimated $10 billion. They range from banks and commercial firms to factories and department stores, most of them directed by sharp entrepreneurs who seem to have scant regard for Marxist-Leninist doctrine. One of China's leading business representatives in the colony, Wang Guangying, is a jovial figure in his 60s who would be at home at any weekly Rotary luncheon. He proudly accumulates such acquired cornball titles as "Admiral in the Texas Navy" and "Honorary Citizen of Minneapolis," both picked up on frequent trade missions to the States.

A decade from now, Hong Kong may very well turn out to be a Sino-American consortium. Britain's economic stake in the colony has been overshadowed in recent years by U.S. investment, currently second only to that of China—with Japan third. America is also the colony's largest customer, consuming almost 40 percent of Hong Kong's annual exports. China is Hong Kong's principal food supplier, yet the colony is the world's number one market for American oranges, apples, melons and fresh eggs. For some inscrutable reason, each Hong Kong resident eats three times as many oranges annually as the average American. The reason cannot be nutrition, since, per capita, Hong Kong also drinks more French cognac than any place on Earth.

During my days in Hong Kong, British influence still predominated. Our children, to their chagrin, learned arithmetic in pounds, shillings and pence. A weekly event was Sunday tiffin, or luncheon, at the staid Hong Kong Club, now supplanted as the colony's social center by the swank American Club. Both Westerners and Chinese crowd its lavish penthouse atop Exchange Center for Tex-Mex evenings of tacos and tortillas eaten to the twang of country music. Hong Kong TV, which originally introduced me to BBC masterpieces, currently features *Dallas* and *Dynasty*. Daniel Ng, a University of Illinois graduate who pioneered McDonald's in Hong Kong, now has 40 outlets there. "In 1997," he says, "I'll be here, more McDonald's will be here and our customers will be here, too."

I might be exuding the same optimism had our premature Broadway delicatessen survived. Were we still in business, Hong Kong—with its adaptability and international razzle-dazzle—would be bolting down our blintzes and cheesecake. And we, of all the colony's enterprises, might most confidently be facing the future under the rule of the Chinese—who did, after all, invent chicken-noodle soup.

Hong Kong keeps a few rickshas for tourists, but has more Rollses per square foot than any city on Earth.

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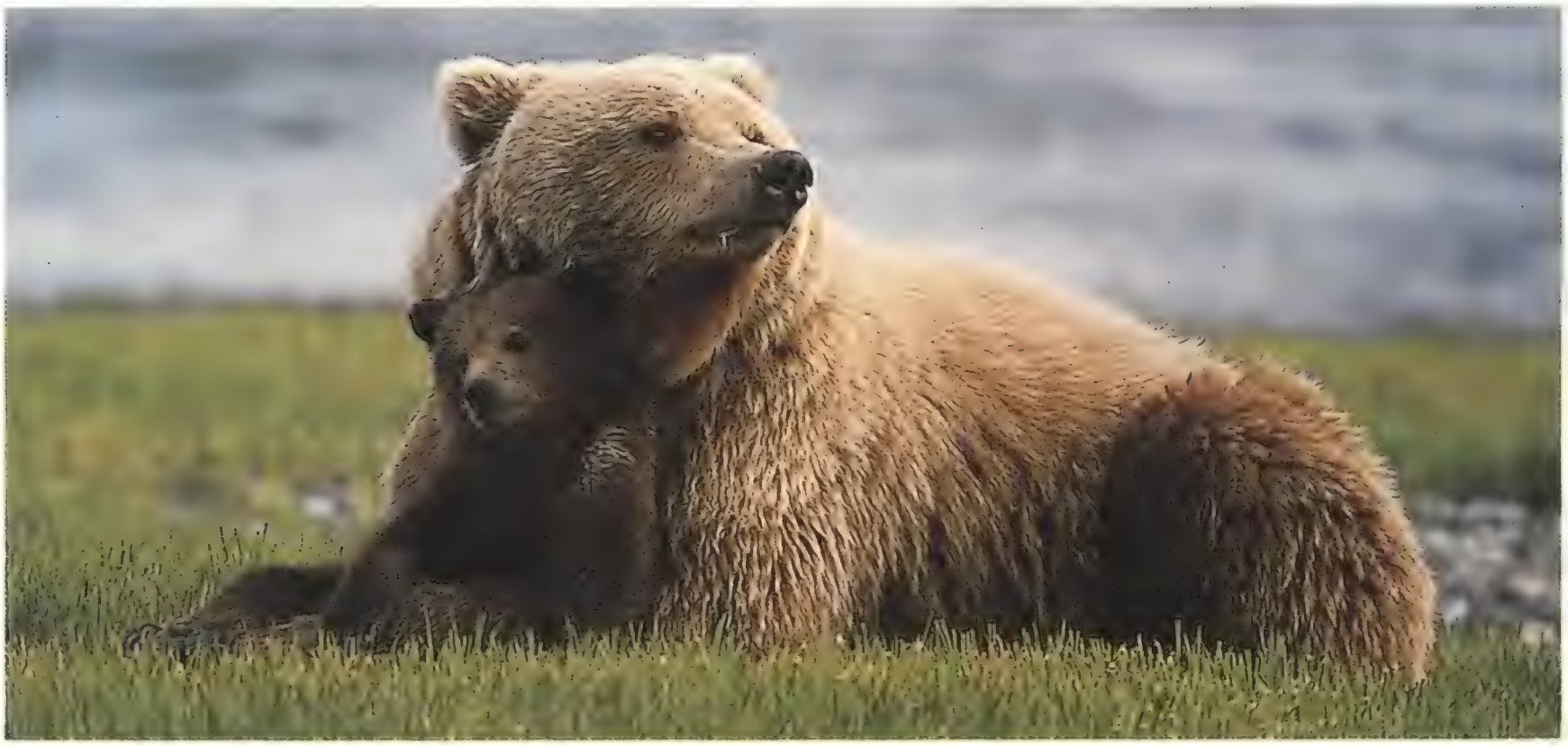
Article and photographs by Boyd Norton

It's a good thing McNeil's big bears get plenty to eat

Otherwise they might not be quite so willing to tolerate all of the people who tramp through their refuge in Alaska every summer



Opposite: Larry Aumiller stands quietly as curious brown bear checks him out at McNeil River sanctuary.

Similarly unconcerned, Teddy and her 6-month-old cub relax, offering a photo opportunity to visitors.

I'm no stranger to hazardous assignments. I've photographed poisonous snakes, hotshot bush pilots, snorting Cape buffalo, whitewater rapids, mountain gorillas and Moscow taxi drivers. For absolute terror, however, nothing quite compares to having a 450-pound brown bear charge straight at you from a distance of 50 or 60 feet. This happened to me while I was standing on a stream bank in Alaska not long ago. Believe me, the onrushing animal looked very large in the viewfinder of my camera. Fortunately, her objective was not me but a salmon in the water between us. I had met that bear before—her name was Teddy—and I knew her to be tolerant of people. Still, I must admit that my hands were shaking as I focused the lens.

A full-grown brown bear can weigh more than 1,000 pounds, stand 12 feet tall on its hind legs and outrun a horse for short distances. Technically, brown bears are the same species as the grizzly bear—the one known as *Ursus arctos.* There are some differences, however. Brown bears occupy the coastal rim of southern Alaska and parts of the Yukon and British Columbia. Grizzlies are found farther inland, for the most part; their range also includes much of western Canada and some of Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. Brownies tend to be larger; grizzlies tend to have a more dish-shaped face and a more pronounced hump. The main difference, however, is that brown bears have access to migrating salmon and grizzlies don't.

In certain locales in North America, both grizzly bears and brown bears have killed, maimed and, on

Aumiller, who has been manager of the sanctuary since 1976, makes sure people and bears coexist peacefully.

Three cubs stay close behind their mother as family sizes up salmon action downstream on Mikfik Creek.

very rare occasions, eaten people who have ventured into their domain. But at Alaska's McNeil River State Game Sanctuary, where I had my little brush with Teddy, brown bears have developed an unusual willingness to put up with humans in their midst. The sanctuary is located about 250 miles southwest of Anchorage, at the head of the Alaska Peninsula. In the past 16 years, more than 2,500 men and women have visited it without provoking a single bear attack. This is incredible when you consider that the area right around the falls attracts what is probably the highest concentration of bears in the world. Even more amazing, some of the encounters there between humans and beasts occur at distances as close as 15 feet.

An Army illustrator turns bear man

The person responsible for maintaining this remarkable state of peaceful coexistence is biologist Larry Aumiller, the manager of the sanctuary. Aumiller, 44, grew up in Colorado, studied commercial art in college and worked as an Army illustrator during the Vietnam War. Back in civilian life, he decided to look for a job that would enable him to spend more time outdoors. He found one at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), where he worked on various bear projects for biologist Jim Faro, who set up the current visitation system at McNeil River in 1973 and hired Aumiller to run it in 1976.

Aumiller is a tall, bearded man with a wry sense of humor (he calls the bears at McNeil "McBears") and a patient way with people. He and his co-worker, Colleen Matt, who also is his wife, spend all summer at the sanctuary, sleeping in a small shack and working seven days a week, 12 to 14 hours a day. They function not just as guides for visitors but as mediators between them and the bears. Because Aumiller comes into such close daily contact with the animals, he knows how to anticipate problems with certain individuals and how to head them off. According to Faro, he has no peer when it comes to reading and understanding brown bear behavior. "Bears, especially young ones, will occasionally try to push people around," Aumiller says. "They're always testing each other for dominance and sometimes they'll come up to us to see if they can intimidate these strange hairless bipeds. We have to let them know this is not acceptable behavior. But, at the same time, I don't want to overly intimidate them. Every interaction between bears and people here is, essentially, a training session. Depending on what we do or how we behave, we either reinforce or regress with regard to behavior modification."

Behavior modification. It seems a curious term to apply to an animal that has such a formidable reputation. Why are McNeil's bears so amenable to a condi-

Medium-sized male barrels across shallow water in hot pursuit of a fish, which he may chase onto the shore.

Teddy brings in a nice one. A bear her size, about 450 pounds, may consume 45 pounds of salmon in a day.

tioning process that makes them inclined to accept humans? There's no simple answer, but an ample food supply is undoubtedly a big factor. Well-fed bears, it seems, are happier and easier to get along with than their less fortunate brethren, and McNeil's bears are very well fed indeed. Beginning in late June of each year, the animals congregate here to fatten up on migrating salmon. As the fish swim upstream to their spawning areas, they must leap certain obstacles—most notably, the big rock slabs in a 300-foot stretch known as the McNeil River Falls. When thousands of salmon crowd the pools between the rapids, they become easy prey for the bears. In the peak of the season, from early July to mid-August, as many as 106 individual bears (counting cubs) have been spotted here in a single day—a count that has steadily increased since sightings in the early 1970s of only 12 per day. It's a spectacle that has made McNeil famous and is attracting more and more visitors each year.

But the salmon run is not the sole explanation for the way the bears at McNeil behave. "The single most important element in our success with bears is what we do or don't do in our interactions with them," Aumiller says. "The animals must not perceive us as a threat,

Boyd Norton's photographs appear with those of Russian poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko in Divided Twins: Alaska and Siberia *(Viking Penguin, 1988).*

so we try to act as nonthreatening as possible when we're around them. Also, we take great care to make sure that they never associate food with people. The end result is that McNeil's bears perceive humans as neutral entities. Since we're not a source of food and we're not a threat, we can mingle safely. Even when we encounter bears early in the season, before the salmon start running and when they're hungry from a long winter's hibernation, their behavior toward us doesn't change in the least."

To control the impact of visitors, the ADF&G uses a lottery system that limits the number allowed to see the bears at McNeil to ten per day. To maintain a certain consistency in human behavior, Aumiller always uses the same trails, paths and viewing areas. "The bears seem to recognize and respect these as being places where they expect to see us," he says.

People who visit the falls are warned ahead of time that there is some risk and advised that they'll have to do whatever Aumiller tells them to do. His main concern is to minimize the disturbance any group creates. "Sometimes it can get a little complicated," he concedes, "depending on things like how many people we have, how loud or aggressive they are, which bears are present that day and how they're getting along with each other. If we seem to be making a bear nervous, I get the group to act more submissive. We may move closer together, which makes the group's size appear

Aumiller catnaps beside tripod while a more alert visitor keeps her eye on a pair of bears resting nearby.

less formidable. We stop making noise, we may sit down, we may even slowly move away. If, on the other hand, a bear starts acting assertive, we may do the opposite—spread out and stand up on logs or rocks, talk loudly, maybe even wave our arms around. Every interaction is different and it's up to us to read the people and the bears, and make sure they're responding appropriately to each other."

Normally, bears are solitary animals—loners accustomed to ranging over extremely large areas. The unusual concentration of so many at McNeil creates a certain amount of stress. Consequently, the animals have developed a loosely structured social hierarchy. At the top of the ladder are big, battle-scarred males like Chaser. Weighing perhaps 1,100 pounds, Chaser "kicks ass and takes names," jokes Aumiller. Then there are the females with young, who can be ferocious in defense of their offspring, often intimidating all but the largest males. Further down the ladder are various young males; sometimes they compete for dominance, sometimes they're tolerant of one another.

The attitude of the bears toward humans usually ranges from casual indifference and outright boredom to mild curiosity, but sometimes it's more active than that, which can be a problem. Take the case of Mongrel. When he was an adolescent around 4 or 5 years old, according to Aumiller, Mongrel "seemed to be just that—sort of a mutt, looking for his place." At one point, he discovered how much fun it was to gallop up to a group of people and stop only a few feet away. Aumiller discourages such behavior by standing his ground, yelling and waving his arms. Most bears are chastened and retreat. But after the first few such encounters, Mongrel wasn't deterred; indeed, he became even bolder.

How Aumiller made Mongrel behave

It was a potentially serious situation, for such boldness might eventually result in harm to visitors. At the same time, something as drastic as firing a warning shot from his rifle (Aumiller has never had to do that) might be too frightening, not only to Mongrel but to the other bears, as well. Aumiller's solution? The next time Mongrel started going into his bluff-charge act, Aumiller launched a preemptive strike. He charged Mongrel first. It worked. The baffled bear began to behave himself. Aumiller is quick to warn, however, that this procedure could be fatal if applied to certain other bears, such as Chaser. "He might take it as a challenge to his supremacy."

There are times when close approaches by bears do not represent a threat. On my first visit to McNeil, for example, Aumiller was escorting a small group of us when we spotted Teddy asleep on a grassy hummock

BRITTANY HAIFA LAHAINA WATERFORD BALI NICE SYDNEY TANGIER JUNEAU LENINGRAD FORT-DE-FRANCE SANTAREM CAPRI
LIVORNO PERTH MYKONOS KUALA LUMPUR NEW YORK OSLO PIRAEUS LONDON PAPEETE
BORDEAUX BANGKOK QUEBEC BORA BORA BOMBAY SINGAPORE ROME SYRACUSE WHITTIER
COPENHAGEN DUBROVNIK TOKYO GEIRANGER HONG KONG BEIJING HONOLULU BERGEN VIGO GDANSK ST. CRUZ MOOREA PALMA DE MALLORCA PLAYA DEL CARMEN
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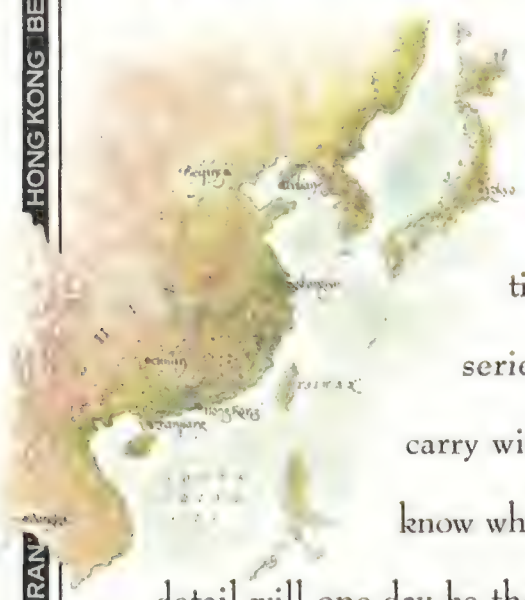

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Larry Aumiller

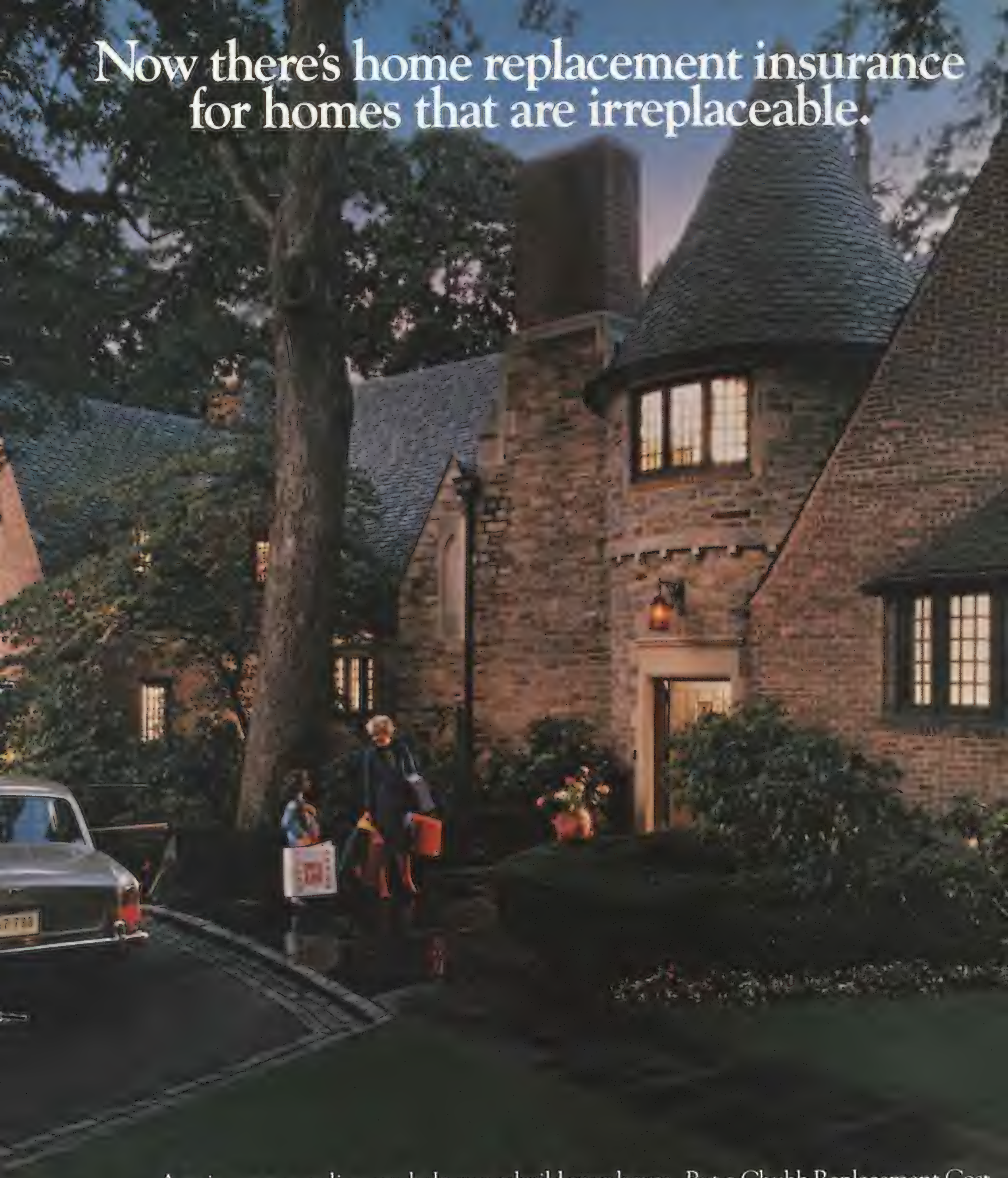
Visitors snap shutters while bears snap at salmon. To minimize the disturbance of animals and impact on the environment, only one group of up to ten tourists a day is allowed to visit bears' favorite fishing area.

on the tidal flats of McNeil Cove. A beautiful, blonde bear, she was about 6 years old and had given birth to her first cub earlier that year. Though Aumiller knew her to be very tolerant, he wasn't sure how she would act with a cub around. We stopped about 150 feet away and set up tripods to take pictures. Teddy got up, stretched and then, with the cub padding along, slowly ambled over to visit us. She stopped on another hummock only 50 feet away, where she and the cub grazed on grass and sedges, an important part of a bear's diet. After a few moments, both creatures stretched out and snoozed, totally indifferent to the clatter of cameras and whine of motor drives. Then Teddy got up and just sat there, looking at us and studying the landscape while the cub frolicked at her feet.

It almost seemed as though the new mother, being an old acquaintance of Aumiller's, was proudly showing off her cub to him. But some in our group had a different idea. Maybe, they conjectured, Teddy had seen older bears attack cubs but also noticed that those same bears acted timid around people—in which case, she might have been using us as a safe haven. Aumiller doesn't buy either theory. "Bears are intelligent but that's granting them a dimension they don't have," he says. "More likely, Teddy is just looking for a good place to graze."

There's a limit to how chummy you want a bear to get. One sunny afternoon Aumiller was sitting in his shack with his back to the open door when he heard a noise. He turned slowly to discover Teddy standing on the doorstep with her cub at her side. Aumiller looked at her and said, "You know, we don't allow bears in here." Teddy slowly backed away and ambled off.

When it comes to avoiding run-ins with bears, the experts have a leg up on the rest of us, but even they can get into trouble, as Aumiller found out not long ago. One day he went to pick up his mail where an airplane drops it off, a half-mile from camp, and found a copy of *Bear Attacks*, a new book by his friend and fellow bear biologist Stephen Herrero. Aumiller began reading the book on his way back to camp and became so engrossed in a section on how to avoid trouble with bears that he violated a cardinal rule: pay attention. Finally he looked up and saw a bear walking right at him. The bear was even more surprised than Aumiller. It jumped off the path and ran away.



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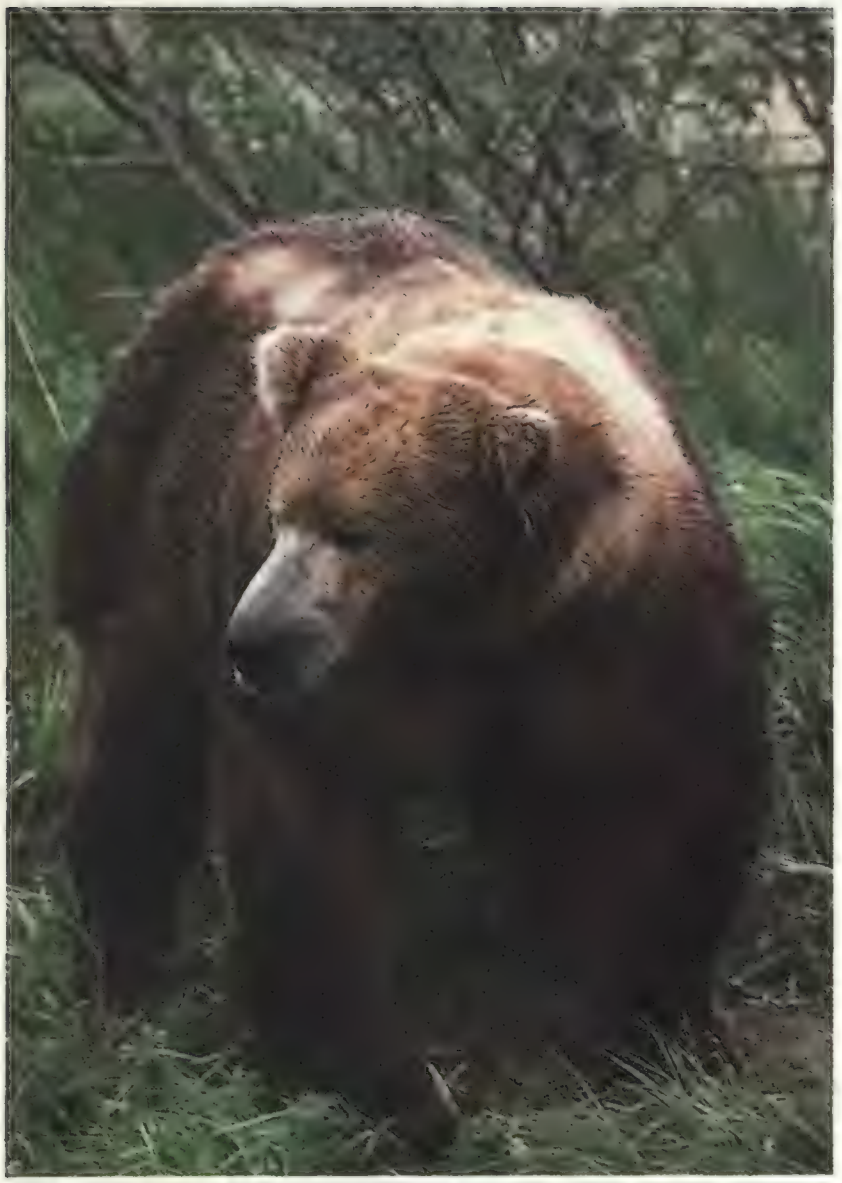


Chaser, an 1,100-pound male, can be very aggressive around other bears, but people just make him wary.

Some encounters have been even closer. Once when he was lying by himself on the tundra, Aumiller allowed a young male named Cecil to approach and actually touch him. The bear sniffed at one of his boots and pants legs, and then, his curiosity apparently satisfied, he wandered off.

This hardly seems typical of the way big bears act elsewhere in Alaska. Four years ago, two employees of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management were mauled by a female brown bear with cubs only 50 miles from the McNeil River. And I've had some anxious moments myself with aggressive grizzlies in the Brooks Range farther to the north. Aumiller speculates that bears living in areas where food is not as abundant may be more aggressive because any potential food source—including the occasional human intruder who may be carrying food—must be investigated.

Sometimes survival is difficult for the McNeil bears, too. Though shooting is not allowed within the 100-square-mile sanctuary, brown bears can be taken outside of it during the hunting season. Before and after the salmon migration, the animals wander over great distances and sometimes leave the sanctuary. When bears have not been habituated to people, they usually turn tail and beat a retreat at the first sign that someone is around. (The popular image of the man-killing brown bear is a myth.) When they've lost their natural wariness, however, the creatures are easy prey for hunters.

Commercial salmon fishing has also been a problem. In the past, fishermen have blocked off the mouth of a major spawning stream in McNeil Cove with their nets. On occasion, the nets have remained in place at low tide, attracting bears to the fish. To protect their valuable nets, the fishermen fired warning shots, threw rocks and yelled at the bears, all of which threatened to destroy the trust Larry Aumiller had worked hard to instill in the animals.

If the impact of development or hunting reaches the point where McNeil's bear population is threatened, the ADF&G will have to consider its options, including expansion of the sanctuary's boundaries northward. Some bear people suspect it's only a matter of time before something will have to be done. In addition to giving the bears more protection, expansion would safeguard more of the habitat the animals need for denning and cub rearing. (The sanctuary is already protected to the south, where it borders Katmai National Park.) As for commercial fishing, blocking off creeks with nets is no longer permitted, and fishermen are accepting stricter controls on what they may do.

Alaska is a state where "consumptive use" of wildlife, as game managers refer to hunting, trapping and fishing, is considered as routine as going to the supermarket or the gas station. It's not a place noted for widespread preservationist sentiment. But among state politicians and bureaucrats, at least, there seems to be an awareness of how special the McNeil sanctuary is and a determination to make sure it stays that way.

What if one of McNeil's bears nails a visitor? Although Aumiller considers that prospect unlikely, he concedes that it is possible. He's been charged seven or eight times himself. "We're talking full-out, brush-busting, huffing, saliva-dripping charges," he says. In each case, the bear drew up short. But if something does happen one of these days, Aumiller hopes the legal and political fallout won't affect the sanctuary. "There are plenty of places where bears once existed but no longer do," he says. "And unfortunately, given current human attitudes toward these animals, there will doubtless be more in the future. I just hope and pray that McNeil will never be one of them."

After catching fish all day, an obviously well-fed Teddy sits down to enjoy a tranquil moment with her cub.

By Deedee Moore

Shooting straight: the many worlds of Gordon Parks

He won fame as a magazine photojournalist, but then came the composing, the writing, the directing; and now, his new ballet, Martin

Piled high on the dining table of Gordon Parks' otherwise neat apartment are solicitations for donations, invitations to galleries and dinner parties, personal notes from old pals and eager young women, requests for appearances at schools, museums and film festivals from Los Angeles to Bombay, letters from youngsters and requests for autographs. Clippings about his latest interviews and awards float among unopened bills and incoming checks. Stacked more carefully are papers related to his two current projects: the manuscript of his fourth autobiography, and his recently completed musical score and libretto for *Martin*, a ballet in tribute to Martin Luther King jr.

Parks pushes papers aside and sits down to sip steaming, sugared tea and light his ever-present pipe. It is noon and his day is just beginning as the unlisted phone with the number everyone knows starts ringing. He moves to and from the phone, jotting numbers and important notes on any scrap at hand, while searching for one of six pairs of eyeglasses left somewhere in his path. "This is," he notes with a half-resigned grin, "an ordinary day in an ordinary week."

At 76, while others are slowing down, Gordon Parks is still gearing up. He first made a name for himself as a photographer while on the staff of *Life* magazine from 1949 to 1968. But he is also a successful writer, composer, poet and film director. Today, he enjoys the attention and admiration he receives; but even more, he enjoys the freedom to pursue only those ideas that really excite him.

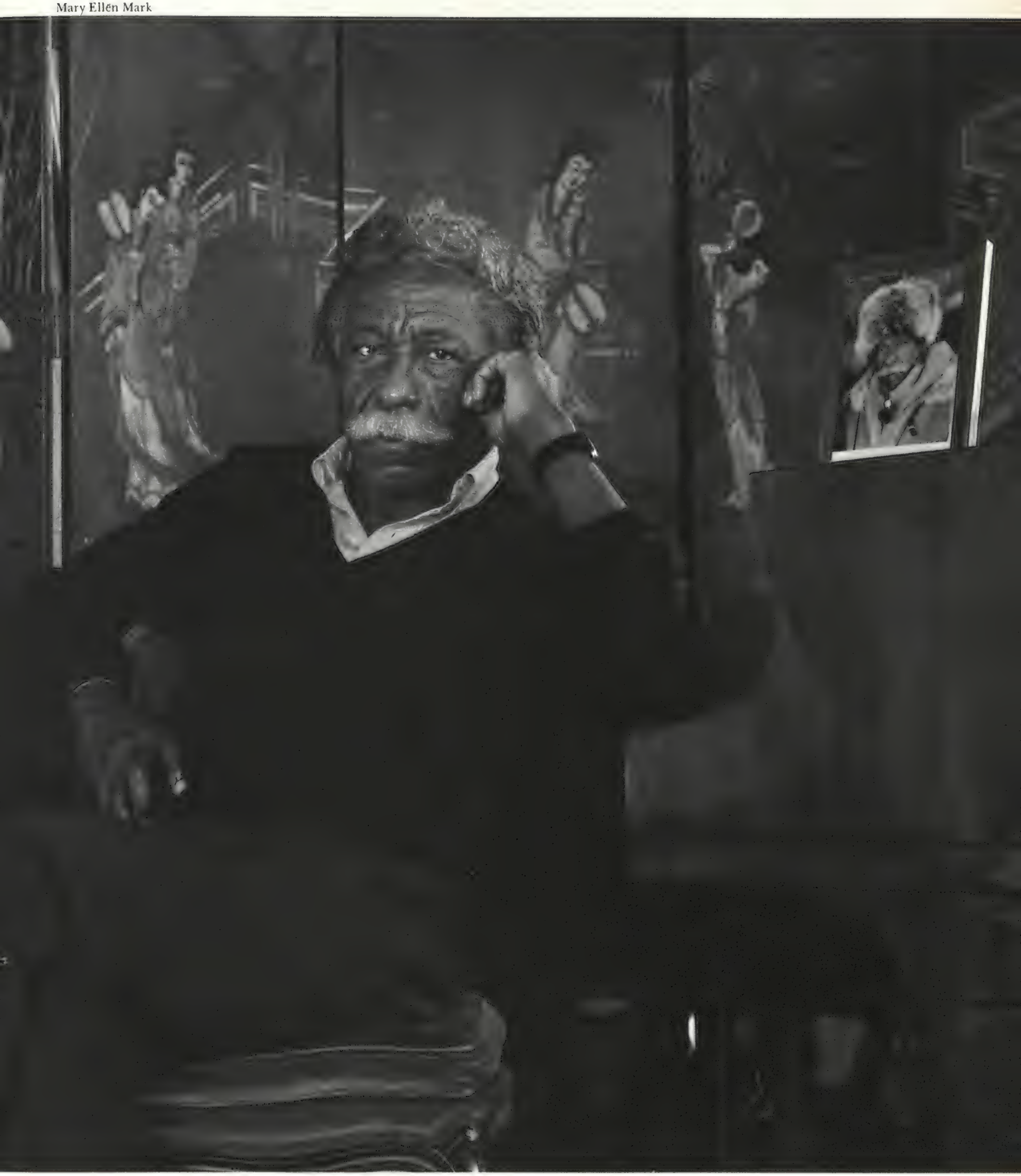
Like the ballet project. In order to write *Martin*, Parks had to combine many of the talents he's developed during his long career: his early years as a photographer with the Farm Security Administration (FSA), learning documentary technique with the guidance and support of Roy Stryker; then his work at *Life* and other magazines; also his musical experience—early on, touring briefly with a big band, later composing classical works; his strange sojourn in Hollywood from 1968 to 1976, writing and directing five films, including *Shaft* (a hit) and *Leadbelly* (released only after a struggle with the studio); and, all along the way, his writing—technical photography books, essays, poems, fiction and autobiographical works (*The Learning Tree* and *A Choice of Weapons*, both autobiographical, are studied in schools across America).

"It's taken this long for people to understand and put together all the various elements of his contributions, and . . . to realize he is an institution for us," said Joseph Jordan, director of Washington, D.C.'s African-American Writing Institute, to the *Washington Post* last year. "[Parks] has to be an inspiration."

In August 1988 at the White House, President Reagan presented Parks with the National Medal of Arts. As he accepted it, the White House press corps put down their cameras to give one of their own a special ovation. Later, Parks candidly told reporters that it had been a long journey back; while he was proud to be lunching at the White House, it made him recall Washington in 1942 when, as a black, he was not allowed to eat in even the cheapest whites-only restaurants. His photograph of Mrs. Ella Watson, a poor, black, government charwoman whom he posed, broom and mop in hand, against the American flag, was the first he took after arriving (p. 68). Parks called it *American Gothic, Washington, D.C.* "I learned how to fight the evil of poverty—along with the evil of racism—with the camera," he says. "*American Gothic* expresses that more than any other photograph I have taken." Parks had chosen his weapon well.

Dirt-poor, but rock-solid values

It was a choice his parents would have applauded. Born in 1912 in Fort Scott, Kansas, Gordon was the 15th and last child of Sarah and Andrew Jackson Parks, devout Methodists. They were dirt-poor but they got by, teaching their children to value honor, education and equality—and the importance of telling the truth (a theme that Parks develops in *The Learning Tree*). The atmosphere in Fort Scott "was electrified with racial tensions," says Parks, but he developed a fierce determination to succeed. A childhood friend, Elmer Kinard (Beansy in *The Learning Tree*), recalls: "When Gordon's momma was dying she told us to



In his Manhattan apartment, Gordon Parks sits next to an old friend, his treasured Bechstein piano. Here, he wrote the musical score for his most recent project, the ballet *Martin*, which honors Dr. King.

Parks took photograph of Ella Watson, a government charwoman, just after arriving in Washington, D.C.

make something of ourselves. Even as a boy, Gordon pushed himself; he wanted a better life, and he sure was gifted—used to write nice essays, and he could pick up almost any instrument and just start playing."

Hard times came after Parks' mother died. Nearly 16, he moved to the home of a sister in St. Paul, Minnesota; but then, following an argument, her husband threw him out into an icy December. He struggled to finish high school, supporting himself by playing piano in a brothel, mopping up flophouse floors, any job he could get. There was a fight with a starving dog over a stunned pigeon that both needed for survival. He thinks of that time, which he has written about in *A Choice of Weapons*, as a sentence in hell. As his health and the nation's gave way to depression, gone was his dream of a diploma.

Finally, Parks got a job as a busboy at the Hotel Lowry, which hosted big bands on tour. Between meals, he'd play his own tunes on the ballroom piano. A visiting bandleader heard him, asked if the band could play his songs and invited him to join their tour. Parks thought he was on his way, but when they got to New York the band broke up. So did two more dreams—of a career in music, and of Harlem as Beulahland. He still thinks of the harshness of Harlem; he was miserable there, living in a rat-infested room, unable to find work. He got out of New York by enrolling in the Civilian Conservation Corps.

After the CCC, Parks opted for Minnesota, marriage (his first of three) and a secure, traditional job for blacks—dining car waiter for the railroad. That's when he started noticing photography. In magazines, he came across pictures taken by Ben Shahn, Carl Mydans, John Vachon, Dorothea Lange and other FSA photographers. Late at night he'd sit in the dining car studying them. Then, on a layover in Chicago, he saw a newsreel in a movie theater—a Japanese attack on a U.S. gunboat in China; he watched in amazement as it sank. To his surprise, when the reel ended the photographer bounded out of the audience and onto the stage to receive applause. I could do this, he thought; and he picked up a small Voightlander Brilliant camera at a Seattle hockshop during a layover.

A crucial move to Chicago

Within a few years Parks had done a fashion shoot for a posh shop. Joe Louis' wife, Marva, saw the photographs and urged him to move to Chicago, where she could assure him of plenty of work. Then Chicago's South Side Art Center offered to let him use their darkroom facilities. He went, supporting his family by photographing fashionable ladies as he documented life in the city's slums. That documentary series won him a Rosenwald Fellowship, paying $200 a month,

A Springfield, Connecticut, farmer was part of a "face of America" series shot for Standard Oil, where Parks again worked for Roy Stryker after both of them had left the Farm Security Administration.

and the opportunity to choose his employer. In January 1942 he arrived in Washington to work for Roy Stryker in the FSA photography department.

Stryker threw his full weight behind Parks; he could see right away that the new man was good—and also that it was going to be tough: the lab technicians wouldn't speak to him. You'll win them over, he told Parks. Just keep cool and prove what you can do. Parks did and they came around.

Then there was the cafeteria; whites sat in the front, blacks in the back. In an interview with scholar Martin Bush several years ago, Parks described how that problem was solved. His second day there, he went in with fellow photographer John Vachon ("If you were in trouble, John was the guy to be with") and sat down in the front to eat. The cafeteria manager told him to move. When Parks refused, the fellow headed down to Stryker's office and complained, "That nigger's out there eating in the cafeteria—in the white section."

Free-lance writer Deedee Moore, a longtime friend of Gordon Parks', is a former editor of Vogue *and specializes in writing profiles.*

Stryker, ordinarily good-natured, blew his stack. "That 'nigger' is an employee of mine, and a damned good employee," he said; "and he will eat damn well where he damn well wants to, and I damn well don't want to hear any more out of you."

Parks' job while at the FSA was to document Americans in their everyday life—people at work and at church, and living in Washington's slums. Between assignments, he would shoot whenever he could. It was high-volume work with stimulating peers.

After the FSA disbanded in 1943, Parks began making the rounds of major magazines. Gradually, assignments came through. Rejected at Hearst because he was black, he turned to Condé Nast, where editorial director Alex Liberman, after seeing his portfolio, said simply, "We must give it a try." Free-lance assignments for *Glamour* and *Vogue* followed. During the '40s he also worked at Standard Oil (New Jersey) on a project to document American life (above)—fruit stand owners in Maine, stevedores on the Manhattan waterfront, commuters on the Staten Island Ferry.

Parks' first big trial assignment for *Life*, in 1948, was on Harlem gangs, an idea he suggested to picture editor

Photograph of Ingrid Bergman was taken while on a visit with the actress and Roberto Rossellini during the filming of the 1950 movie *Stromboli*, in Italy.

Harlem gang leader Red Jackson awaits showdown; he was the subject of Parks' first series for *Life*.

Muhammad Ali posed "like a gentleman" in 1966 after successful defense of world heavyweight title.

Walking the grounds at a Benedictine monastery, monks observe their daily hour of silence, a practice Parks himself has followed since the assignment in 1955.

For a Paris fashion shoot in 1949, Parks placed the model in a natural setting.

Lucy Jefferson of Fort Scott, Kansas, whom Parks photographed in 1949, was a friend of his mother's during his childhood.

John Dominis

Gordon Parks jr.

Directing *The Learning Tree* in Kansas in 1968, Parks gives out instructions before shooting a scene.

He also composed the music for the film, his first, working for three months at his piano in Hollywood.

Wilson Hicks. He found a gang leader, Red Jackson, and stayed at his side for three months. Things got rough. "You know the picture I have of Red?" he asks today. "He has a gun in there, a .45."

In that picture (p. 70), Red was waiting for a showdown. "Hey, Mr. Parks," Red had said that morning, "you may have to run 'cause the other gang is probably waiting for us. So you'd better travel light." Later that day they encountered the rivals and ran for the hideout. Parks recalls the scene: "People see us running and begin to get off the street, closing their doors. They know it's a gang war starting. We run up the back stairs and that's where Red knocked out a window, and that's where he got out his .45 and motioned the guys down, waiting. I moved back in a corner and took the shot. . . ." After the assignment was completed, Parks invited Jackson and the other gang members to his home. It was, he says, the first time they'd ever seen the countryside.

As Parks works on his latest autobiography, delving into the philosophical hows and whys of his life, he ponders not only the chances he has taken, but also other people who have taken risks. Among them, Alex Liberman; and Wilson Hicks, who brought him aboard *Life*. When *Life*'s new fashion editor, Sally Kirkland sr., was looking for a photographer who could cover the Paris collections, Parks was tapped. Kirkland and Parks sailed to France in 1949, returning with a cover and an eight-page spread.

In 1950, Parks was posted back to Paris for two years; it was a plum assignment and a period of creativity. He composed classical music and began to keep a written journal. Among his friends were novelist Richard Wright, conductor Dean Dixon and pianist Vivian Rivkin, Dixon's wife. The Dixons spurred him to write a concerto that they premiered in Venice.

Parks completed more than 300 major assignments at *Life* on every conceivable subject, from junior high school science conventions to French autoworkers' strikes; from headache clinics to hurricanes. By the early 1960s, having honed his writing skills, he wrote his own essays, a rarity at that magazine.

Sometimes his work became so intertwined with his life that there was no separation. In 1961, on assignment in Brazil to document poverty in the slums, he befriended a young, asthmatic boy named Flavio (pp. 76-77). When his photoessay on Flavio and his family ran in *Life*, readers were so moved that they responded with donations, and a clinic in Colorado offered Flavio free treatment. Parks brought the boy to the clinic, where he was successfully treated. Today Flavio lives outside Rio with his wife and children, and the two remain friends.

As the civil rights movement gained momentum,

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Parks covered segregated schools, the Black Muslims, the Freedom March and other central events and figures. It was largely because Malcolm X trusted Parks that he permitted *Life* to do a story on the Black Muslims (in his autobiography Malcolm X wrote, "Success among whites never made Parks lose touch with black reality").

"Gordon was on the road a great deal in the '60s," says Phil Kunhardt jr., who was then an assistant managing editor at *Life*. "The whole country was upside down and the magazine was trying desperately to cover it all responsibly. Gordon was one of the real stars. At first he made his name with fashion, but when he covered the racial strife for us, there was no question that he was a black photographer with enormous connections and access to the black community and its leaders. He tried to show what was really going on there for a big, popular, fundamentally conservative white magazine."

It was a difficult position. In one of his essays of that period, later collected into the book *Born Black*, Parks wrote: "Eventually I found myself on a plateau of loneliness, not knowing really where I belonged. In one world I was a social oddity. In the other I was almost a stranger. . . . Many times I wondered whether my achievement was worth the loneliness. . . ."

Parks left *Life* in 1968; by then he had made two documentary films, written two best-sellers and accrued 30 years of experience in still photography. He wanted to break into the movie industry, but Hollywood was a lockout. Actor John Cassavetes urged him to film *The Learning Tree* and introduced him to Ken Hyman at Warner Brothers, who gave Parks the opportunity not only to direct it, but also to write the screenplay and score. Parks wanted to do a second sensitive, lyrical film, but he was offered *Shaft*; the private-eye thriller was a commercial success. *Shaft's Big Score!* followed, with Parks' song "Don't Misunderstand." Parks is proud of these two films and the character of Shaft—"a regular guy," he says.

Covering the Black Muslims for *Life* in 1963, Parks photographed a Harlem crowd listening to Malcolm X.

Parks' final Hollywood film, *Leadbelly*, told the story of blues musician Huddie Ledbetter—his impetuous youth, the racial harassment he endured, and his long-term imprisonment—with sensitivity and honesty. But just as Parks finished shooting, the studio's top brass changed and the film was shelved. Parks and others fought hard; the film was released, but without publicity. Since then it has surfaced occasionally at museums and film festivals.

Creating opportunities for other blacks

In his new autobiography Parks plans to acknowledge his disappointment with Hollywood. As the first black director there, he led a revolution in the industry, creating opportunities for other blacks. On his first film, the crew was 99 percent white; by the time he made *Leadbelly*, it was about 50 percent black. Yet, the film he is proudest of never reached mass distribution. He is also disappointed with some wealthy and influential black investors who, he believes, could more actively support young black directors and filmmakers.

Since Parks first attained success, younger black photographers have gathered around him for advice and encouragement; to them, he's "Pops." One of them, Adger Cowans, worked with Parks and lived with his family when he arrived in New York. "Gordon has been in politics for years over his work," says Cowans. "It takes real finesse to get things done the way he wants—especially if you're black."

Today, as he sits in his spectacular apartment, high above New York's East River, Gordon Parks is modest about himself. "I felt somewhere down the line that some blacks who were a hell of a lot better than I was didn't get recognition. I was just stubborn," he says. (But he makes no apologies. Recently, a French interviewer, obviously probing, asked how he felt about living in a posh midtown co-op. "I'd like it a lot better if it had four more rooms," he answered smoothly.) His magnificent Bechstein grand piano dominates the scene; it is covered with silver-framed photographs of his friends and family (his former wives; two grandsons, Alain, 27, and Gordon III, 9; and four children: daughter Leslie, in Boston; Gordon jr., who directed *Superfly* and died in a plane crash before his own son was born; David, a documentary filmmaker in Texas; and Toni, the older daughter, a trained musician and

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the latest Parks to take up a camera professionally).

As music wafts through the stereo system—his music assistant, Mario Sprouse, set up a recording studio in the den for their work on the ballet—Parks finally settles down. He cuts a fine figure with his signature mustache and his dashing salt-and-pepper hair swept back with the pride of the Cherokee heritage Parks inherited from his Oklahoma-born father.

"You want to know how I really feel?" he asks. He reads from the new autobiography:

> As a child, I had no reason to like or respect white people. For those first years in Kansas, they had, through racism, made life miserable for all blacks in the state. Yet I held no hatred for them either—because my parents would not tolerate hatred against anyone. . . . For me it was not a matter of wanting to be like them, but a desire to share in what they had. . . . There was only one recourse. I would have to work a thousand times harder—and, even then, I might not live with their grace and privilege. But, early enough I decided to give them a run for their money, and I knew anger wouldn't be much of an asset—unless it was harnessed and kept under control. That wasn't easy, but I gathered it in and bottled it up inside me, not yet aware of how much I would someday use it for creative stimulus.

As he looks out at the river he seems to be framing the view as well as his words. "I have done a lot of work. What I suffered comes out now only in my dreams—terrible, violent dreams. I wake up fighting, slashing. This book has brought up a lot of my past, and sometimes I feel like it's being hurled at me, with little time to back off. I've held so much in for so long, always had to watch what I said, be very careful, because I've been accused of being egotistical. I don't think I am; I've played down a lot of things because of that. I *do* have confidence—I've spent years facing the mirror, working on that; but I don't trust others that much anymore."

Talk then turns to the banning of books, a subject that he recently discussed in a lecture to university students. Years earlier, members of evangelist Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority had backed lawsuit after lawsuit against *The Learning Tree*, trying to get it banned. The American Civil Liberties Union took the case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court before it was dropped. Parks tells the story with a characteristic twinkle in his eye. "Every time there was a lawsuit, there was publicity, and my publishers would print another 15,000 copies," he says. "Sometimes I wish Falwell had tried to ban my other books. Then I could fund the ballet myself." (Parks is now seeking funding so that he can film his ballet; he dreams of it being televised each year on Dr. King's birthday.)

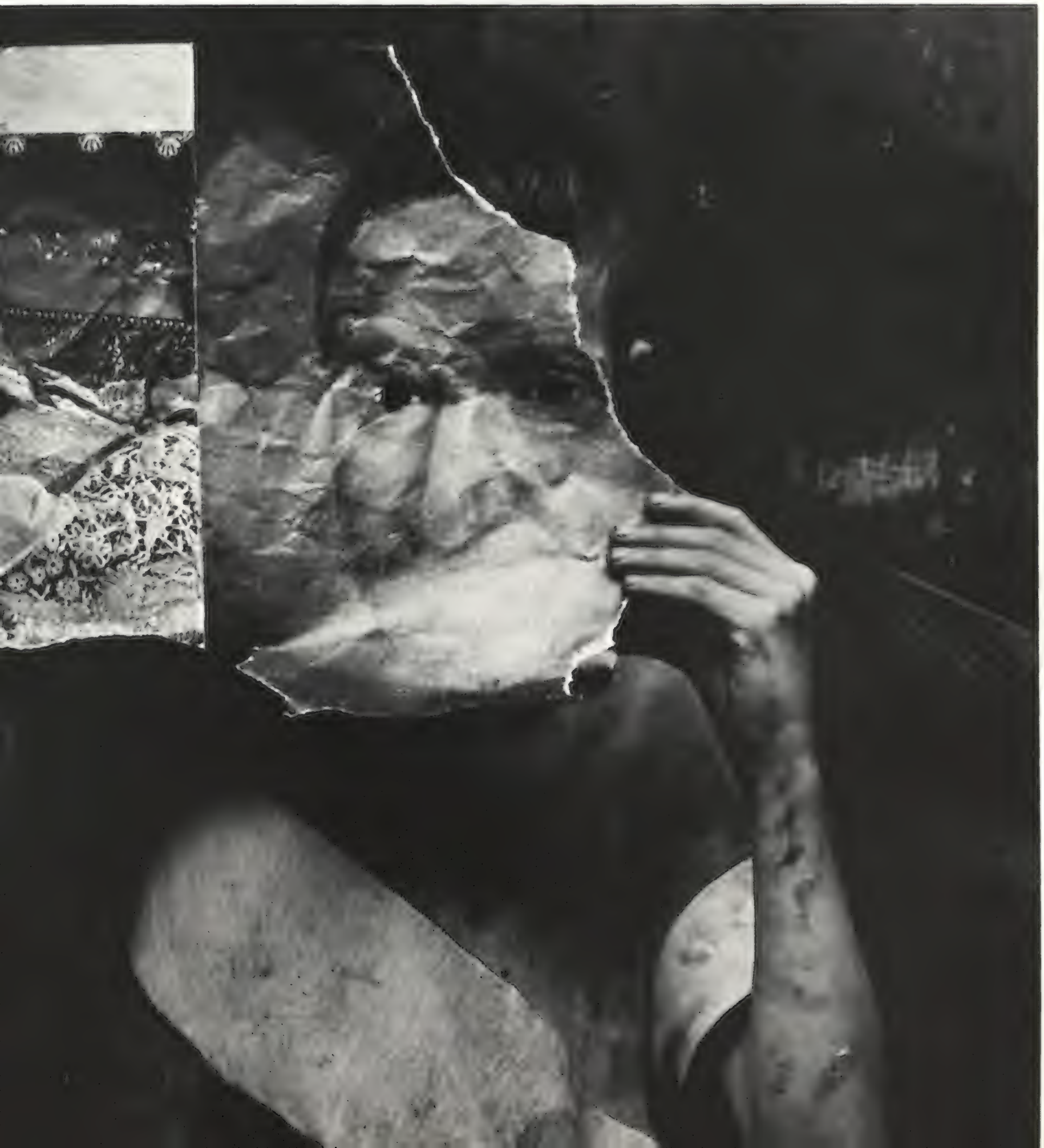
Later in the conversation, Parks talks about what drives him. "The pictures of my momma and poppa are right over there on that shelf. That's where I get my inspiration. When I want to make a decision and I

Flavio, a Brazilian slum child whom Parks befriended, dons a crude mask to cheer up his little brother.

have doubts, they say, Do it right, don't be ashamed of your decisions. That's why they sit right there, and I mean, they look at, they look *through* you!"

He sets the tape to play *Martin* and we listen. Tension permeates the music for the opening dance, forecasting conflict and tragedy to come; then grand orchestral harmonies extoll the virtues of the hero. Protest marches are marked by heavy, throbbing beats, and King's laments by mournful cellos and voices. Sounds of progress, soaring lightly, are halted briefly by the chilling jolt of King's murder. Divided races beat out discordant rhythms that gradually coalesce to suggest hope that a great dream may still come true.

Sensing the need to ease the atmosphere, he says casually, "That's what I've been working on all these years." Gordon Parks draws on his pipe and looks over at the pictures of his parents. "I like to think they know I've tried to make something of myself."



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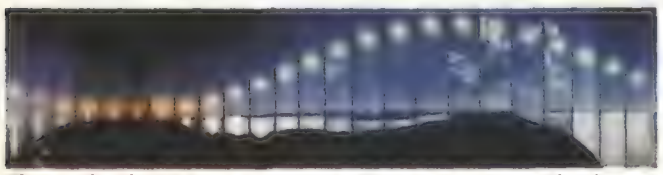

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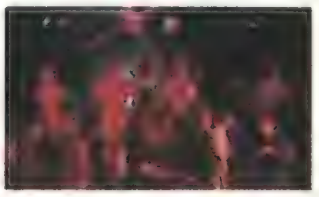

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National Portrait Gallery

By Verlyn Klinkenborg

Thomas Hart Benton came from Missouri—and he showed 'em

After a deep look at Parisian bohemian life the artist returned home and spent a long career painting the very innards of America

Every successful American artist of small-town, Midwestern origins has wondered, How on earth did I get here from there? For Thomas Hart Benton, born April 15 a century ago, here and there were finally one and the same: Missouri. Of all the changes that came over that state in the 85 years of his life, the most important, he might have said, was that at last it made elbow room for the "Big I," as his father called Benton because he would not shut up about himself. That is the Benton we like to remember: a short, cocksure fellow with a mouth as big as his talent and a strong appetite for America. He is the painterly Twain, the populist Michelangelo, the public artist to a fault.

The man on the cover of *Time*'s December 24, 1934, issue—the most famous artist in America—must have marveled at appearing there. Benton had often faced down self-doubt and concerted opposition, but the hardest part of his artistic career was surviving his birthright. He was named for his great-uncle, a prominent U.S. Senator and advocate of Westward expansion. His father, Maecenas Eason (M.E.) Benton, was a Missouri lawyer and politician. To M.E. and to the voters who sent him to Congress, the world's only beauty was its use. A child was born to go down hard, familiar roads laid out by calculating settlers whose minds, as one writer put it, "exasperated the European as a buzz-saw might exasperate a pine forest." A boy born into that world was not supposed to be a painter.

Self Portrait with Rita (Piacenza), done in 1922, the year they married, is stylized, handsome and direct.

That Benton grew up stubborn and egotistical should surprise no one: stubbornness and egotism in defense of his talent were all that lay between him and filing briefs in a county courthouse for life. What still surprises is that the works for which he is best known—vigorous paintings of the Midwest and South, so familiar now as to seem the natural consequence of his upbringing—came about only because he rebelled against his own rebellion. From the temples of high modernism, Benton was seduced by the vernacular, by the commonplace lives of folk who embodied, as he said, "the most complete denial of aesthetic sensibility that has probably ever been known." Turning from Parisian, avant-garde abstraction, he canvassed the backroads of this country and took it upon himself to show Americans their national face whether they liked it or not.

Benton's works have now been gathered for a centennial exhibition opening this month at the Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City, his home after 1935. It allows us to reconsider what he made of us and what we made of him. For Benton's career, more than that of any other painter, was shaped by a single question: What does America require from its art?

In 1924, M.E. Benton lay dying of throat cancer in Springfield, Missouri. By his side, mending fences, sat his long-estranged son. As a child, Tom Benton had lived the way most small-town boys do—on the rampage. But as some fathers take their sons fishing and hunting, M.E. also took his campaigning through the hill country of southwestern Missouri, near home in Neosho. At 7, Tom Benton likely knew more about politics and the effects of tobacco and whiskey on corpulent men than did most persons three times his age. As he nursed his father, familiar faces from the campaign trail—old Missouri pols—paid their last respects. They regaled M.E. with memories, tales intended, his son said, to "jerk him back" from illness. They did not stay death, but they had a profound effect on the painter who sat watching them. "I cannot

Benton Trusts

In the French countryside, struck by the slanting light, Benton painted *Contre Soleil* in 1910.

honestly say," he wrote in *An Artist in America,* his 1937 autobiography, "what happened to me while I watched my father die and listened to the voices of his friends, but . . . I was moved by a great desire to know more of the America which I had glimpsed in the suggestive words of his old cronies. . . ."

This was the turning point in Benton's life, and it was founded upon an irony. M.E. Benton and his cronies, those "Show me" Missouri Democrats, were the very men the narrowness of whose world had driven him to bohemian Paris and then New York. And yet here, nearly 20 years after M.E.'s last campaign, Benton found in the same people a vein of inspiration and a "deep run of common human sentiment which I shared." Summer by summer thereafter, by foot and by car, he wandered among them. This inspired a change of artistic motive for which, unknowingly, he had long been preparing. It meant making art not merely *from* America, but *for* it.

For more than a decade after going to Paris in 1908, Benton had experimented with modernism and non-representational form. Even as a student writing from Chicago in 1907 to his mother, Elizabeth—an elegant, commanding Texan—he could announce, "My art is not to be the art of realism." It was unimportant, he told her, "whether you can distinguish one object from another or not, whether the thing painted looks like a man, woman, or dog." Paris did everything to give that attitude weight. There Benton met Stanton Macdonald-Wright—"the most gifted all-around fellow I ever knew"—who developed Synchromism, an influential theory of abstract color organization. Wavering "in all the winds and isms of the time," Benton absorbed the innovations transforming the art world, adopting a battery of styles derived from the Impressionists, Cézanne and the Cubists. Though most of his early works were destroyed when the family home in Neosho burned down in 1917, those that do survive, an example being *Contre Soleil* (above), a Pointillist canvas that he painted in France in 1910, are startling in the context of his later work.

Yet alongside his modernist forays, Benton roamed the Louvre with a sketchbook. Quick to catch character in the lines of a face, he had loathed as a student the academic stages of schooling, the sketching of plaster casts and still lifes. He preferred living models and "a fat gob of color," and confessed "innate rebelliousness . . . which made me resent instruction." But in the Louvre he probed the figural principles of Italian Renaissance painters, learning from them to create rhythm and depth, to discern the inner structures of pictorial form. Paris taught him, too, the sins of artistic ambition. He kept a mistress and grew a beard. Surmising both, Elizabeth Benton came to France in 1911 to restore her son to conformity. She took him home to Missouri to be safe. But he fled Eastward again within the year.

Then as now, the battle for artistic high ground in the United States was being waged in New York. Into that battle Benton dropped in 1912, a brash young man in tight French clothing, eager to discover how far his Parisian arrogance would get him. It got him al-

Mrs. Deen Day Smith

Benton went to Paris in 1908, continued to experiment for years afterward, as in *Three Figures*, circa 1916.

Benton Trusts

Rhythmic Construction, 1919, so radically different from later works, continued Benton's experimentalism.

most nowhere, though it enabled him to make some important enemies. The next five years saw shifting roommates, shifting alliances, shifting confidence: ". . . changing my ways with every whiff from Paris," Benton did not even have the steadiness of his art to sustain him. The only constants were his friends Macdonald-Wright and Thomas Craven, a writer and art critic who would later become one of his most outspoken supporters.

"From the day I met him," Craven wrote, "to the end of [World War I], I do not believe he painted a single consistent picture. He had enormous energy and determination, but his productions were not his own." Benton lacked not so much a style as a reason to have a style. He was never the kind of painter who, like a mathematician, rejoices in the purity of technical problems, for whom each painting is a proof. His stand on realism became more equivocal than it had been as an art student under the romantic influence of Whistler. His eye hungered outward, not inward, toward a closer correspondence with the world than that offered by the rather insincere imitations he was painting at that time.

From early 1918 till the end of the war, Benton served in the Navy at Norfolk, Virginia, heaving coal, and making official perspective sketches and drawings of camouflaged ships. Surrounded by "bone-headed southern boys" with whom he got along "splendidly," he rediscovered his muscularity in a world of machinery and men. He ate well for a change and was ordered by naval brass to be a military realist in his sketches, to make a dog resemble a dog right down to the bark. The Navy deserves credit for forcing a personal artistic breakthrough. "My interests became, in a flash, of an objective nature," Benton wrote. "The mechanical contrivances of building, the new airplanes, the blimps, the dredges, the ships of the base, because they were so interesting in themselves, tore me away from . . . the art-for-art's-sake world in which I had hitherto lived" and "opened thereby a way to a world which, though always around me, I had not seen. That was the world of America."

As it did many before him, the Navy freed Benton from romantic illusion. By 1924, he could look back on nearly six years of modest, but growing, success. He had mounted an exceptional show of watercolors done

Verlyn Klinkenborg is working on a book about the Morgan Library. A teacher of creative writing, he wrote on harvesting hay in September 1986.

The man from Missouri who showed 'em

Mr. and Mrs. R. Crosby Kemper

Benton's formal technical mastery is evident in *Spring Still Life with Peony*, painted from 1943 to 1946.

in his off-hours at Norfolk—"a cubist's holiday," said the *New York Times*—and started an important series of large paintings on American history. His theoretical studies of form had deepened and were nearing print. He began spending his summers in a downbeat place on Martha's Vineyard with one of his former students, Rita Piacenza, whom he married in 1922. She gave his life more stability than he could possibly subvert.

Then, round his father's deathbed, the voices of his boyhood gathered. He turned 35 listening to them.

Where did Benton's art come from? The easy answer is America, that wood in which he lost himself in the middle of the journey of his life. Beyond the Hudson, he found an undiscovered country where the substance of his vision nearly overwhelmed him, where routine rarely bowed to theory, and style was not as strong as fact. Every road betrayed a barn or shack from which might stare a face worth sketching. Every courthouse had its color, every field its mule. Those days it seemed as though no wrinkle in the landscape passed without imparting a social effect. Watershed by watershed, life was lived a little differently, so Benton wandered America—especially the South—to find the "barriers of locality," the slight variations from town to town and farm to farm which, when measured across a country as broad as this one, amounted almost to infinity. Regionalism—the Midwestern school of Benton, Grant Wood and John Steuart Curry—pictured borders where borders no longer exist. It was a movement for a time when the United States had not yet grown so uniform.

But that's the easy answer. The less familiar one is that Benton's art came from ideas. Despite his disclaimers, Benton was an intellectual—intemperate, true, but at ease with thought and exposition. All his life, he buttressed his art by writing, and it is hard to mistake the clarity with which he wrote about his work. In print he is not quite the same man who, given a reporter and a glass of whiskey, might say of a landscape, "By God, that just makes the seat of your pants smokey!" He used many different voices, all in support—if not in harmony—of a single art.

Topsy-turvy in the art world

By the time he matured artistically, the onus of theoretical justification no longer fell upon avant-garde painters, but upon those who, like Benton, now unequivocally upheld the conservative value of realism. In the '20s and '30s, Benton found himself defending his work against modernist positions that had once been his own, as well as against a frequently irate public. He did so with literary élan and sheer invective. To his credit, he made realism as controversial as Cubism. He accordingly gave the public a kind of painting

it could understand, but he made its implications hard to swallow.

Benton was a realist, but, as he remarked in 1924, even a realist "must create a new meaning." To mirror the subject directly is impossible, he argued, for painting is the creation of forms, and "form demands an obvious imposition of will on the elements of experience." Benton was absorbed his life long by questions of visual rhythm and sequence—"the hollow and the bulge" that echo each other, the "go and come" of pictorial forces. Beneath the subject in his paintings and especially in his murals, a massive, muscular tide of curving forms projects not only from side to side but also backward and forward in depth, as if they were sculpture, not two-dimensional shapes.

From Benton to Pollock, "a rhythm, a flow"

Benton's studies in what he called the "mechanics of form organization" began in the abstract, divorced from subject matter. He found, for instance, that he could diagram the rhythm of the human body in a few nonfigurative pen strokes. His work was continued and refined in the abstract by his most famous student, Jackson Pollock. As one friend aptly said, "There was a rhythm, a flow, between them from the beginning to the end of their lives." From Benton in the late '20s, Pollock learned how to create visual rhythm and the "all-over" method of composition, in which design uniformly encompasses the whole of a canvas' space. In Pollock's early representational works, his teacher's influence is obvious, but even in his later "drip paintings" the results of Benton's studies of form are plain. That Benton's importance should have been distilled and made pervasive through works of utter abstraction is the greatest irony of his career.

For Benton, the study of form had a concrete purpose which is most visible in his murals. They are his masterpieces, the projects he painted in the '30s, and the manner of their creation helps explain the contentiousness of his rise to fame. Most painters, as they progress, move from easel painting to easel painting in relative privacy. For Benton, a major new work meant marshaling political forces, arousing newspapers, conquering a wall, mustering troops of eggs for his egg tempera paints, and all in all a public festival of virtuosity and vitriol.

Picture him painting his Indiana mural for the 1933 Chicago world's fair. Easing out the design with incredible speed after intense preparation, relieved only by a "Children's Hour" of nightly boozing with politicians and the press, he painted the equivalent of a 5-by-8-foot canvas each day for 63 days straight. Like a climber, he loved the feel of being "on the wall." "A mural is for me a kind of emotional spree," he said.

United Missouri Bancshares

Thomas Craven, a Kansan who became a leading New York art critic, was portrayed by Benton in 1919.

"The very thought of the large spaces puts me in an exalted state of mind, strings up my energies, and heightens the color of the world." About Benton at work there was an uninhibited excitement that stays kindled on the wall itself and still fires viewers leaning backward to gawk. His *America Today* murals create the sensation, one critic wrote, "of looking out of the window of a train speeding through cities, past factories and mines, through farmland and woods, over prairies, across rivers. They convey a sense of the restless, teeming, tumultuous life of this country, its wide range of contrasts, and its epic proportions. . . ."

Benton's murals reveal his fascination with the epic and American history, an interest that first surfaced in the Navy. In painting a historical epic (which all his murals are, even those based on contemporary life), he faced immense problems. History is hard to paint. Artists have always done so incidentally, of course, by picturing the look of things about them. But in many of Benton's works, history is not just an accident—that sense of dislocation that comes to the modern viewer from looking back in time—it is also their purpose.

Painting has tended to treat historical subjects statically: a momentous event is caught at its climax and so rendered symbolic. From art one gets the uneasy sense

Overleaf: Scenes from the *State of Missouri* murals

Benton's all-encompassing *A Social History of the State of Missouri* of which "Politics, Farming and Law" section is shown on pages 88-89 and 96-97, was completed in 1936 for the House Lounge of the Missouri State Capitol in Jefferson City. This powerful work caused the legislators to erupt with immense blasts of outrage.

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National Museum of American Art

In 1947 Benton began work on a mural for Harzfeld's, a Kansas City ladies' clothing store whose proprietor, his friend Lester Siegel, implored ". . . for God's sake, try to let me stay in business." The artist complied:

he painted *Achelous and Hercules* from mythology—without excessive nudity. Hercules wresting horn from river god Achelous, in bull form, represents the taming of rampaging, flood-prone Missouri at Kansas City.

Where, they cried, were the heroes of the state? Why all those ordinary people? Benton replied, "The ordinary Missouri mule had more to do with the actual growth of the state than any of its favorite sons." Shown here is the north wall section, "Pioneer Days and Early Settlers," with models chosen from among everyday folk.

← Fold out

The man from Missouri who showed 'em

that historical figures were always posing. The hero is stilled at precisely the instant of triumph, for that is what makes him a hero. But for Benton, history is a passage and a movement; he tries to give his works the narrative power of literature. Look at any of his great murals—*America Today* (1930), now at New York's Equitable Center; *A Social History of the State of Missouri* (pp. 88-89; 90, 95; 96-97) in the Capitol at Jefferson City (1936); even his early *American Historical Epic* at the Nelson-Atkins Museum—and one sees the effect of his stress on rhythm. Figure bends to figure, scene yields to scene, and as one's eye wanders, led onward by a sequence of forms, group harmonies dissolve and refocus. In the way Benton's humans and machines contort as they near one another, there is a special gravity that distorts pictorial space.

And as there is no stasis in these paintings—no seizing of climactic moments—so there are no heroes of the traditional kind. For Benton, an epic is not a lofty tale of men and women of high station, nor is it a wan allegory of virtue, freedom and progress of the kind visible in so much public art. His epic is the story of common people, an epic of the average that cannot be rendered by scenes of triumphant apotheosis. It needs instead a narrative of routine, a history of repeated activities—the doings of an ordinary day. This too is plainly visible in Benton's murals. The people on his walls do what we'll all be doing when we get home from looking at the people on his walls. They are working, dancing, drinking, loving—engaging in the familiar virtues and vices of the species.

That is what made the murals so controversial. In project after project—especially the Indiana and Missouri murals—Benton provoked public outrage. There was nothing reverential about his treatment of America; piety was replaced by keen-edged realism. Nearly everyone found something to complain about. In the

Private collection

Tobacco Sorters, 1944, an accomplished example of regional art, was commissioned by the tobacco industry.

Indiana mural, Lincoln's head, a critic said, was made too small for his brain capacity; and the portraits of early settlers, complained another, "should offend the sensibilities of every Hoosier." Reaction to the Jefferson City mural was more extreme: a Tulsa paper cried, "Shame on you, Thomas Hart Benton," while a local farmer observed that if he had a calf like the one in the mural, he would "take it to the woods, shoot it, and bury it to keep it from his dogs."

Realism is a double-edged sword. To Benton's public in the '30s, it promised a recognizable refuge from the alienation of modernism, but in his hands it re-

A business executive's demands on portrayal of subject turned Benton from commercialism forever.

vealed a world full of familiar faces with strangely familiar flaws, the world of the rural United States in which he had immersed himself after his father's death. His critics reacted as a political underling once had when Benton portrayed the man's boss with a broken nose: " 'That's a accident,' replied Sam. 'We don't want no pitchurs of accidents.' " In particular, they wanted no pictures of historical accidents: no slavery, no Ku Klux Klan, no Jesse James, no oppression. What they wanted was not realism at all, but Renaissance idealism of the kind that makes men look like angels. To complaints that his murals were loud and not in good taste, Benton responded, not altogether defensively, "they represent the U.S. which is also loud and not in 'good taste.' "

Benton was never one to pour oil on rough waters. He might well have said of himself what he said of Alfred Stieglitz, the most influential advocate of modern art in the early 20th century: "He has a mania for self-aggrandizement and his mouth is never shut." Who but Benton would wonder in print whether Stieglitz could throw a baseball straight? Who else could bid farewell to New York in 1935 with such vehemence that, by the time he finished explaining his remarks six years later, it had cost him his job as a teacher in Kansas City?

Perhaps the purest example of Benton's capacity to stir an audience is his 1939 work *Persephone* (p. 101), which is also his finest easel painting. To this day it elicits gasps from viewers and detours from school groups. *Persephone* is a nude whose nudity exposes the nakedness of all previous nudes. Like *Susanna and the Elders* (1938), it undresses an ancient convention of art. "I left nothing out which the positions of my ladies permitted to be seen," said Benton, and hence they were branded "lewd, immoral, obscene, lascivious, degrading, an insult to womanhood and the lowest expression of pure filth." Everyone exaggerates in the presence of *Persephone.*

Ancient myth and hillbilly manners

The myth behind the painting is that of a rape: Pluto, god of the underworld, seizes Persephone and takes her home to be his queen. What is shocking about Benton's painting is not the woman herself, lying dreamily beside a pool of water, but the gaze of Pluto—a knobby-headed, mule-driving farmer. Henry Adams, curator of American Art at the Nelson-Atkins Museum and author of an important new biography of Benton, suggests that beneath the sexual dynamic of *Persephone* lies Benton's response to several sexual traumas, especially the strained relations between his parents. Like Pluto, Adams writes, "His father was an old, fat, ugly man with hillbilly manners." Like Persephone, "his mother was young and beautiful."

But while *Persephone* addresses personal and cultural attitudes toward sex and recasts a celebrated myth, it also implicates Benton's audience. One's eye, no matter how prudish, naturally gravitates to the beauty of Persephone's form. Only later does one notice the kneeling farmer who watches too, as if mirroring the viewer. And there is a further symmetry. As the farmer watches Persephone, so the viewer regards the painting as a whole, not just the nude at its center. It is as if Benton were slyly, satirically portraying in *Persephone* the relation between the public and his painting. That is not only Pluto peering through the

Benton Trusts

Benton painted this head-on, unvarnished self-portrait in his 81st year with the assurance of an Old Master.

vines at immaculate beauty, it is also the ignorant of America taking in Art.

Of Cubism, Guillaume Apollinaire, the French critic and poet, was to write, "the art of prophecy is born at last." Benton came of age during that birth, yet his is decidedly not a prophetic art. It is instead an art of the social and historical record, the more so because it caught the look of a life that virtually disappeared during the Depression and World War II. In the rationalized, suburbanized Oz that is the postwar United States, Benton's vision softened and grew nostalgic. Active until the very evening of his death in 1975, his capacity for controversy never diminished, though his opportunities lessened. He became a favorite son, the man President Harry S. Truman christened "the best damned painter in America."

At the heart of Benton's finest work and writing there lies a vision worth restating. He firmly believed that art cannot prosper from genius and abstraction alone: to develop new forms and revive itself, art must turn to life as it is lived around it. "America," he was proud to say in 1924, "offers more possibilities in the field of theme to her artists than any country in the world." But if modern art were vitalized by America's thematic potential, then in simple fairness, Benton thought, America must also be enriched by what painting returns to its culture. Art would thus "function in American life and the American artist would find himself no more a mere exhibitor . . . but a creator within society, paid like a good workman for purposeful work."

The artist as workman enriching the lives of ordinary people: these are not new ideas. They pervaded the intellectual life of the 1910s and '20s in New York, a time of radical leftist thinking in which Benton shared. They define the works of the Mexican muralists Rivera (SMITHSONIAN, February 1986) and Orozco, by whom he was greatly influenced. As he grew famous, the fashion arose of calling Benton reactionary, a fashion his habits of wild speech only strengthened. But in the sources of his art and its meaning, there is nothing so ill-tempered. Despite his rhetoric, Benton was a native, populist radical, sprung from good Missouri soil. Between the native radical and the native reactionary it can be hard to distinguish.

Especially among artists. America likes its artists raw, throbbing and drumming in public. Benton played to that preference, painting *Persephone* in front of his students, and his murals before visitors, living the artistic life in the open as if the privacy and inwardness of the creative impulse were not to be trusted. Benton fits the familiar mold of Jack London, John Steinbeck, Ernest Hemingway—the roughneck artist, the temperamental genius disguised as a Joe. But beneath the denim and swagger, there lurks something else: a soul, Benton said, "impregnated with a deep sense of the value of life, of the beauty of the basic human emotions and of the sadness of the drama of human striving."

To the end, Benton remained an egotist, but his egotism was, so to speak, without a center, capable at once of disarming honesty and unmeditated self-mockery. Of himself, he could say that "In the art field I'm competing with Rembrandt, and as a harmonica player I'm competing with Larry Adler." He could downplay his talent to "monkeying" with a pencil. Perhaps he came closest to describing himself when he characterized the "bone-headed" boys he knew in the Navy: "Their egos," he found, "were not of the frigid, touchy sort developed by brooding much on the importance of the self. They were objective. They were interested in things, rather than selves." Thomas Hart Benton, the objective egotist: it somehow makes sense.

Persephone, an x-ray examination of the Greek legend and of rural America, 1938-39, has become famous.

Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

Home on the range at a Vancouver seashore park, John Dobson demonstrates rope tricks with his lariat.

By Don Moser

A salesman for the heavens wants to rope you in

In case you haven't met any attractive stars or planets lately, astronomer John Dobson will be glad to make you an offer you can't refuse

Meanwhile, some passers-by he's lassoed check out afternoon moon through a small Dobsonian telescope.

"Come, come see the sun!" says the pitchman to a covey of tourists on the lakeshore. "I give you the sun, the whole sun and nothing but the sun!" He stoops to greet a little girl. "Want an elevator ride?" he asks, lifting her to the eyepiece of his telescope. "See the green balloon? That's the sun. The dark spot there is a sunspot—a magneto-hydrodynamic *zit* on the face of the sun. It's as big as the Earth."

"Ooh," says the little girl. He puts her down and invites others to peer into his telescope. While they take their turns he keeps up a stream of patter, about magnetism and gravity, the aurora borealis, radio interference, the special design of his telescope that allows people to view the sun without searing their eyeballs. As he speaks his hands describe theatrical arcs, his silver hair flutters in the wind, his voice rises and falls with studied modulation.

After oohs and wows, the people move on, but soon the pitchman spots fresh prey—a couple in Bermuda shorts—and hails them. "Come, come see the sun!"

Thus John Dobson, carny barker for the cosmos. Step right up, ladies and gentlemen, and look through his magical machines. He only wants to sell you the stars, and they won't cost you a dime.

One-man revolution in telescope making

John Dobson is an impoverished ex-monk, a maker of telescopes and an all-round astronomical gadfly. Though in his eighth decade, he has been described as "a '60s hippie who found his niche and stayed in it," and some of his views on cosmology are, to say the least, unconventional. Yet his talents as a teacher and a booster are so luminous that even his critics have been known to refer to him as "a treasure, a national resource." In the past decade or so he has revolutionized amateur astronomy with his innovative ways of building telescopes that are big, simple and cheap, and thus has become a kind of cult hero to the community of amateur astronomers. "What he's done is extraordinary," says one keen amateur. "If you had told me 15 years ago that I'd be the proud owner of a 14.5-inch scope that I could load into a compact car, drive to a dark site and set up in 10 or 15 minutes I'd have called the men in white coats on you."

But for all of his technical inventiveness Dobson has no real interest in the machinery of astronomy. What he cares about is spreading his special gospel. He is fond of quoting the New Zealand astronomer Graham Loftus: "What we need is a big telescope in every village and hamlet, and some bloke there with that fire in his eye who can show something of the glory the world sails in." Dobson, God knows, has the fire, and he's driven to lead us to the glory.

The night is full of wondrous things, huge things that span more of the sky than the moon: giant galaxies that look like pinwheels, clusters where stars swarm like bees, gauzy nebulae adrift in the Milky Way. There are stars revealed as twins locked in gravitational embrace, stars of red and blue and gold, stars that pulsate from bright to dim and back again, and fields and rides of black interstellar dust. But most of these things lie beyond the capacities of the human eye, and so for 20 years now Dobson has roamed the country with his telescopes, setting them up on urban street corners or in the national parks. He calls them "telescopes in public service."

Photographs by Roger Ressmeyer

He has come now to Vancouver Island, where the British Columbia Ministry of Environment and Parks has invited him to give lectures and to set up his telescopes. His domicile on this trip is a battered 1973 Chevy van stuffed with four telescopes, a stepladder, bedding, cardboard boxes full of clothing and utensils, a Bleuet stove for cooking, an acoustic guitar and a lariat for his own entertainment, as well as a skateboard, Frisbee and soccer ball for his 9-year-old son, Loren, who is accompanying him for the summer. On the road Loren rides not in the passenger seat—there is no room for one—but in the boxlike mount of the largest telescope. Living out of the van, Dobson gypsies from park to park, corralling unsuspecting tourists, and with his kinetic energy, his blarney and his rather considerable charm, making them look at things they never knew were there.

A Dobsonian tour of the heavens

He has just given an evening lecture in a campground at a mountain-girt park called Strathcona, and now as the sky darkens he leads 50-odd campers down to the lakeshore and sets up three telescopes, each of which has a nickname. Eleven-inch Stellatrope (star lover) is so tall that it takes a stepladder to reach the eyepiece. Zigadene and Ceanothus, named for plants, are 8 inches and 5 inches (telescopes are always designated by the diameter of their mirrors or lenses).

First he shows people the great star Arcturus so that they can appreciate its orange color, then Vega and, nearby, the twin stars that are each made of twin stars—the "double double." He swings Stellatrope to Albireo, an anchor of the Northern Cross, to reveal it as a double star of gold and pale blue companions. Then he finds the ring nebula, "a gaseous envelope around an old star," a near perfect circle. "Think of a smoke ring," he tells a man at the eyepiece. Then to a younger viewer: "Think of a Froot Loop."

He shifts the telescope. "Here's an edge-on galaxy," he announces. "Like a flying cigar. Don't stare right at it, glance around. We see faint objects with the rod cells around the edges of our eyes, and the rod cells are very stupid."

Dobson has three telescopes to operate, with lines of people at each, and he races back and forth among them. Since the Earth's rotation causes an object to drift out of the eyepiece in a couple of minutes, he has to continually nudge the scope back into proper aim. Up the ladder to Stellatrope ("We've lost it, last person up come back and look again"). Down the ladder and off to Zigadene ("Oh, my, you must have pushed it—here, let's find it again—now look"). Over to Ceanothus, scrunched down with his head a few inches from the ground, his neck twisted as he tries to sight in

After evening lecture at Strathcona, campers line up to peer through Stellatrope at the Andromeda galaxy.

a new object. Back up the ladder to give Stellatrope a push ("Oh, oh, somebody's gummed up the eyepiece, some of the ladies are wearing dark makeup"), down the ladder and off to Zigadene.

He spots a faint smudge rising over the mountains to the east, and he excitedly maneuvers the scope to bring into view an icy glow, the Andromeda galaxy, the nearest galaxy larger than our own (SMITHSONIAN, January 1989). Through Stellatrope it looks like a hole through to the center of creation.

For the moment, as people line up at the ladder, Zigadene, the 8-incher, is left unattended, and one observer slips away and swings the machine toward the constellation Sagittarius and the heart of our own galaxy, the Milky Way. Fat Saturn lies there, just above the trees. In the eyepiece it glows softly, shimmering and reddish through the thick atmosphere near the horizon, its ring a fuzzy cummerbund. The observer

Because of Earth's rotation, Dobson must re-aim scope frequently; the trailing stars suggest sky's motion.

kneels, sights along the tube toward a smoky patch of sky slightly to the north and, ah! there it is, the Lagoon nebula swimming in the night, glorious even at this high latitude, its newborn stars shining through lanes of coal and lace across 4,500 light-years. One of the campers approaches through the darkness, looks through the eyepiece at the Lagoon. "This is terrible," he says. "A person might start getting interested in all of this."

It has grown late, much of the crowd has dispersed for tents and campers, but Dobson is still running up and down the ladder, talking and moving his telescopes to new targets. When a park staffer suggests gently that it might be time to pack in the show, Dobson seems reluctant to quit. He is 72 years old.

Don Moser, the Editor of SMITHSONIAN, *observes the sky through a 6-inch telescope on a Dobsonian mount.*

Born in China, grandson of the founder of Peking University and son of a teacher there, Dobson studied at Berkeley to become a chemist and practiced as one for a while, but Eastern religion had a pull on him and, in 1944, he joined a San Francisco monastery of the Vedanta Society of Northern California (the Rama Krishna order that is noted for its intellectual rigor). He became the *pujari*, the monk who performs the worship and cares for the flowers.

Although he stayed for 23 years in the "monstery," as he sometimes calls it now, he was not a model monk. He wanted to learn about the Universe, as well as the "ultimate reality," and to see how the ultimate reality shows in the world. It was then that he started to build telescopes surreptitiously. Later, when he was transferred to Sacramento, he ground telescope mirrors from the bottoms of jugs in pails of water so as to muffle the sound. He was so impecunious that it took him two years of selling Green Stamps and Blue Chip Stamps to scrounge $45 to have a mirror coated.

But as he moved on to these larger telescopes, perfecting the simple and inexpensive design that would later bring him fame if not fortune, he decided that he had to share his experience.

He would build a telescope and wheel it around the neighborhood until he found a youngster whose parents would agree to keep it in their garage. "Like Paul Revere," he wrote some years ago, "I'd ride through the streets in the evening on an old bicycle, inviting all the people I met to go and look through the telescope at that address." Then, he would "go over the fence" from the monastery to run the telescope, an activity that did not sit well with his superiors. At one point, the outraged abbot ordered one of Dobson's 12-inch telescopes thrown into San Francisco Bay. Finally Dobson was asked to leave the monastery. "It wasn't so much that they objected to the telescopes," he says ruefully. "It's that if you're AWOL so often they assume you're doing *it*."

Early days of starry-eyed dedication

And so in 1967 Dobson found himself penniless, sleeping on a rug in the house of a friend in San Francisco. But he was no stranger to poverty, and he still scrounged materials to build telescopes. Soon he had organized a band of young enthusiasts into a group known as the San Francisco Sidewalk Astronomers, who began setting up telescopes in the middle of the city and attracting lines of people around the block. "He wore long hair and a ponytail," one member of the group recalls, "and people took him for a hippie guru, but he was an intellectual. When people were saying that sloppy thinking was OK, he was saying, think it through." Later, the Sidewalk Astrono-

Dobson holds tiny telescope christened Salt Flats; it was made for looking at eagles along Miracle Beach.

mers went road show. Like Beat generation author Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters, Dobson and his crew converted an old school bus; they loaded it with big telescopes and went touring the national parks. At Yosemite, the Grand Canyon, Sequoia-Kings, Death Valley and other popular vacation spots they would set up telescopes such as Long Eye, the Little One, the gaily painted Psychedelic Zebra ("Cerise and green, and when you looked at it your eyes went bananas") and the 24-inch behemoth, Delphinium. Delphinium was so big that two people could sleep in it at night, and often did ("Cozy as hell and you can't roll out of bed"). The scopes were enormously popular with the public—at times they attracted 400 visitors per night—but Dobson was never able to get significant funding from the National Park Service. Once, when a park ranger questioned the appropriateness of the telescopes, saying, "The sky is not a part of the park," Dobson replied, "No, but the park is a part of the sky."

The Sidewalk Astronomers are less active today—"The group atrophied for lack of funding," says one member. But Dobson soldiers on, traveling the country to give his lectures and to teach people how to build his telescopes. "I guess I have overseen the birth pangs of thousands of telescopes," he says.

The device that Dobson invented is not so much a type of telescope as a system of making and mounting one. Basically he uses the same type of reflecting telescope devised by Sir Isaac Newton in 1668. But where mirrors once had to be thick, thus heavy and expensive, he made them thin, thus light and cheap. Where optical glass had to be used, he found that the portholes of old ships sufficed. Where as many as 14 grades of abrasives had to be used in grinding the mirror, he got the job done with five. Where one phase of mirror-making, the pitch lap, required a full day to complete, he devised a way to do it in five minutes. Where counterweights were customarily used to balance the telescope, he designed a rocker so that weights were unnecessary.

Precision instruments built from scraps

He built his telescopes out of cast-off pieces of plywood and scraps of two-by-fours and hose reels and even chunks of cereal boxes. The tubes were made of Sonotube—heavy cardboard used as forms for pouring cement pilings. Recognizing the friction-free properties of such materials as Teflon, Formica, PVC piping and old phonograph records, he created bearing surfaces that allowed even a large telescope to be moved smoothly by hand, and to stay where it was put.

As a rule, amateur telescopes glitter with a high-tech finish and bristle with complicated accessories. Dobson's scopes look as if they'd been scavenged from a

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At Strathcona, Dobson gives an impromptu lecture on solar phenomena as visitors take a look at sunspots.

Observing sun through an ordinary telescope can cause permanent blindness; Dobson design is fail-safe.

dumpster. After years and miles of use, their cardboard tubes are dented, their plywood mounts scarred and in need of paint. While an 8-inch amateur telescope with accessory widgets can easily cost $3,000, Dobson's monster Delphinium, with eight times the light-gathering capacity, cost only $300 to build.

But these telescopes perform so well that they have been imitated thousands of times, not only by amateur builders but by commercial manufacturers who advertise them as "Dobsonians." Dobson himself earns not a sou from their sale. "I cannot do anything like that," he says. "My mind will let me help people to make telescopes for themselves, but it won't let me make telescopes for sale." He tends to belittle his own technological contributions—"Dobsonian, schmobsonian," he likes to say. What does matter to him is getting big telescopes out there so that people can look through them, and he says with pride, "Now there's all these big telescopes running around loose. At star parties I've seen them running over the hills like cattle."

In his campground lectures Dobson is impish, with an instinct for the homely analogy, explaining the Universe in terms of everything from pizzas to cuckoo clocks and invoking *Star Trek* along the way. He likes to provoke a little. He tells his audience: "Once I said to a minister, the density of matter in the Universe is only 20 drops of water in a billion cubic miles. That's all the creation the Good Lord came up with, and it's no big thing." Dobson grins puckishly: "It was a long time before the minister smiled."

When someone asks him about flying saucers he responds with humor. "Since there are four or five billion people on this planet that I have not yet met, why should I chase after the green ones?"

He says, "Most of the things that I say are within everybody's grasp, but then I try to lead them out for a reach. People need information, and they don't live where they can get it. They live at McDonald's. They live with McNuggets."

The fact that he does lead people out for a reach is what bothers some professional astronomers. "He is a born scientist," one friend says of him, "but all his life he's been trying to reconcile a religious view with a scientific view." The attempted reconciliation has made for critics. "He thinks he's got the secret of the Universe," complains one astronomer.

He is sitting now with his sun telescope on a beach at Rathtrevor Provincial Park on the Strait of Georgia. He is eating yogurt. He is stripped to the waist to take the sun, and around his head he wears a Green Bay Packers T-shirt wound like a turban. He is talking about the big bang theory, the assumption basic to modern cosmology that says, in effect, that the Universe we know began 15 billion years ago when it exploded out of, well, almost nothing. Dobson doesn't subscribe to this view; he believes that it came from an

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Dennis di Cicco

Group of amateur telescope builders watches intently as Dobson demonstrates mirror-making techniques.

underlying reality. "As a monk," he says, "I was interested to understand this whole Universe, and some experience you have had in your past persuades you that there's an ultimate reality behind all this, and you are trying to get to it. That's what monasticism is all about—you're trying to get to the ultimate reality. We have made a boo-boo in our physics in thinking that what underlies our Universe is nothing. You understand in your guts that there is some reality behind all this."

"Isn't this religion?" he is asked.

His response is sharp. "You can call it religion if you like, but I'm talking physics."

He hails some passing bathers, inviting them to look at sunspots. They do, are suitably impressed, and a woman asks, "How much is the donation?"

"No, no, there's no donation, keep your money," Dobson replies. And then he laughs and says, "Some people are afraid of us because they think we might charge them money. Some are afraid because they think we might not. They don't know what you want if you don't want money."

And what about money? "When I went to San Francisco," he confides, "I didn't have anything to live on and my friends kept me up. I don't have anything to live on now, either. Before Proposition 13 [a limit on taxes in California that curtailed funding] came along I taught at the Jewish Community Center and at adult schools all over the Bay Area. For a while I could make both ends wave to each other, I even put money in the bank. It's a little left over from that that I'm living on now. When that's gone I'll have to go on relief. My rent is being paid by a friend in Atlanta, my medical expenses and this tour are being paid for by a friend in Texas. I'm 72 years old, and I don't have any money. I get no Social Security. I'm unemployed."

And was it worth it? "It's important to have done it all these years if it changes one person's life, but I know it's more than that."

All afternoon he sits there in the sun, angling for sunburned bathers walking back up the long tidal strand. Loren is fractious and Dobson sends him off to swim, and then grapples with a question that seems to obsess him. A couple of years ago he confronted the great astronomer Allan R. Sandage at a conference and challenged him with a question that he repeats now. "In the absence of the Universe, in the absence of space and time, why must we assume that there would be nothing? In the absence of time there would be the absence of change, and in the absence of space there would be the absence of smallness and dividedness, but not necessarily nothing. That leaves the possibility that underlying what we see there might be the changeless, the infinite and the undivided, which seems a long way from nothing."

Sandage did not respond—"I didn't understand what he was saying," Sandage recalls—and indeed the question does seem monkishly abstract here on the sunbright beach at Rathtrevor. But a moment later Dobson says something that resonates. "There are questions that live within all of us without words."

On another afternoon at a park called Miracle Beach he has once again set up his sun telescope, has once again stripped to the waist and wrapped the T-shirt around his head. To kill time as he waits for someone to stroll by, he goes to his van and comes back with his lariat, sets it atwirl, leaps nimbly in and out of the loop. "It's simple, like the telescopes," he smiles. "Centrifugal force keeps it out, you keep it in."

Half a dozen tourists emerge from the beach trail and stand there gaping. A man, some mad dervish, elderly, naked to the waist, his head shrouded in a turban, is right there in the provincial park parking lot leaping in and out of a spinning rope. And then he calls to them, "Come, come see the sun!"

And, of course, they do.

In San Francisco's Haight Ashbury, the "audience is most obliging"; Dobson unlimbers 18-inch Little One.

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By Donald Dale Jackson

Take the oath, put on the badge and do the job

That's how the nation's all-purpose federal lawmen have operated ever since we started calling in the marshals two centuries ago

Grim-faced Chief U.S. Marshal escorts James Meredith at the University of Mississippi in the fall of 1962.

Ask anyone what United States Marshals do and chances are you'll get a perplexed look, followed by a bolt of recognition identifying them with John Wayne or James Arness. The guys with the stars, right? Gunning down badmen, making the world safe for schoolmarms. *I'll be moving on now, Mary, this town don't need men like me anymore.*

But hold on. Although it's true that marshals pursued villains on the Western frontier, those also were marshals getting pelted with bullets and bricks when James Meredith enrolled at the University of Mississippi in 1962. Deputy marshals tracked down Christopher Boyce, the "Falcon," after the young man who sold highly sensitive secrets to the Soviets escaped from a federal prison in 1980. Nowadays marshals protect federal judges and provide new identities for frightened witnesses in organized-crime cases.

So who *are* these guys? "People know we're some kind of police force," says Stanley Morris, director of the U.S. Marshals Service. "They know that you 'call in the marshals.' But they don't really have a fix on us. We're still a bit of a mystery." The mystery extends to the spelling of their name; the service dispatches a standard letter to errant journalists pointing out that the word "marshal" has one *l* like "angel," thanks, not two like "hell."

The perplexity has persisted because marshals have always operated as the general practitioners of American law enforcement. Empowered to represent federal authority and enforce federal court orders, they became all-purpose local lawmen available for any nasty job that came up. For more than a century, they were the only civilian force, albeit a decentralized one, that Presidents could summon. They chased mail robbers, counterfeiters and moonshiners; they bird-dogged the Dalton Gang and Billy the Kid, and helped derail the Pullman Strike. They seemed to be in on just about everything.

But in this century marshals began to suffer. Lacking a specialty, they fell out of step in an age of specialization, and their star faded as the FBI flourished. By the 1950s they were little more than politically connected bailiffs tending federal courts. Then they found new vigor as enforcers of court-ordered racial desegregation in the 1960s, and they've taken on several other important jobs in the years since. If their image still remains a bit blurred in the year of their 200th anniversary—it was George Washington who appointed

In an oil painting by E. F. Ward, a resolute marshal rides into a lawless Western town. Duties have varied over the years, from collecting taxes and hunting fugitives to assisting courts and protecting witnesses.

the first marshals in 1789—their hard-won confidence now seems equal to their rich and varied history. "America's Star," a traveling bicentennial exhibit commemorating marshals, opened at the Supreme Court building in the nation's capital last December and stops off this month in Oklahoma City before moving on to 11 other cities.

Even in Washington's day, marshals were the shock troops who enforced unpopular federal laws. The first organized defiance of the national government's authority flared after a tax was imposed on whiskey distillers in 1791. Farmers in western Pennsylvania, where booze was a major cash crop, tarred and feathered several tax men who showed up to collect. When a federal court issued orders in 1794 demanding to know why 75 distillers had ignored the tax, an intrepid marshal named David Lenox delivered the papers.

Lenox had the misfortune to blunder into a mob that had surrounded the home of a local tax official. He was taken captive, then escaped into the woods. President Washington, viewing the Whiskey Rebellion as a direct challenge to federal authority, called out 13,000 state militiamen to put it down; it would be the first but not the last time that troops would finish what marshals began.

From train robberies in the late 19th century to airplane hijackings in the 20th, the crimes that captured the attention of marshals reflected the evolving state of the nation. In the years just before the Civil War, when hundreds of banks printed their own currency and as much as one-third of the cash in circulation was funny money, the modish crime was counterfeiting. Its artful operatives were known as "coneymen." Marshals, throughout the 19th century the only federal officers with arrest power, were assigned to pursue coneymen.

Counterfeiters were notably shrewd and elusive as

A ragtag crew of unemployed workers, swelling the ranks of Coxey's "army," march on road to Washington.

outlaws go, and it took both imagination and perseverance to bag one. A particularly wily coneyman named James Burns became the obsession of Ohio marshal Daniel Robertson in the 1840s. As described by Marshals Service historian Frederick S. Calhoun in his forthcoming book about marshals in U.S. history, Burns was both a lecturer—on "phrenology, education and morals"—and a manufacturer of bogus coins. Robertson and his deputies found plaster coin molds in Burns' house and gathered other evidence, but still they couldn't track him down.

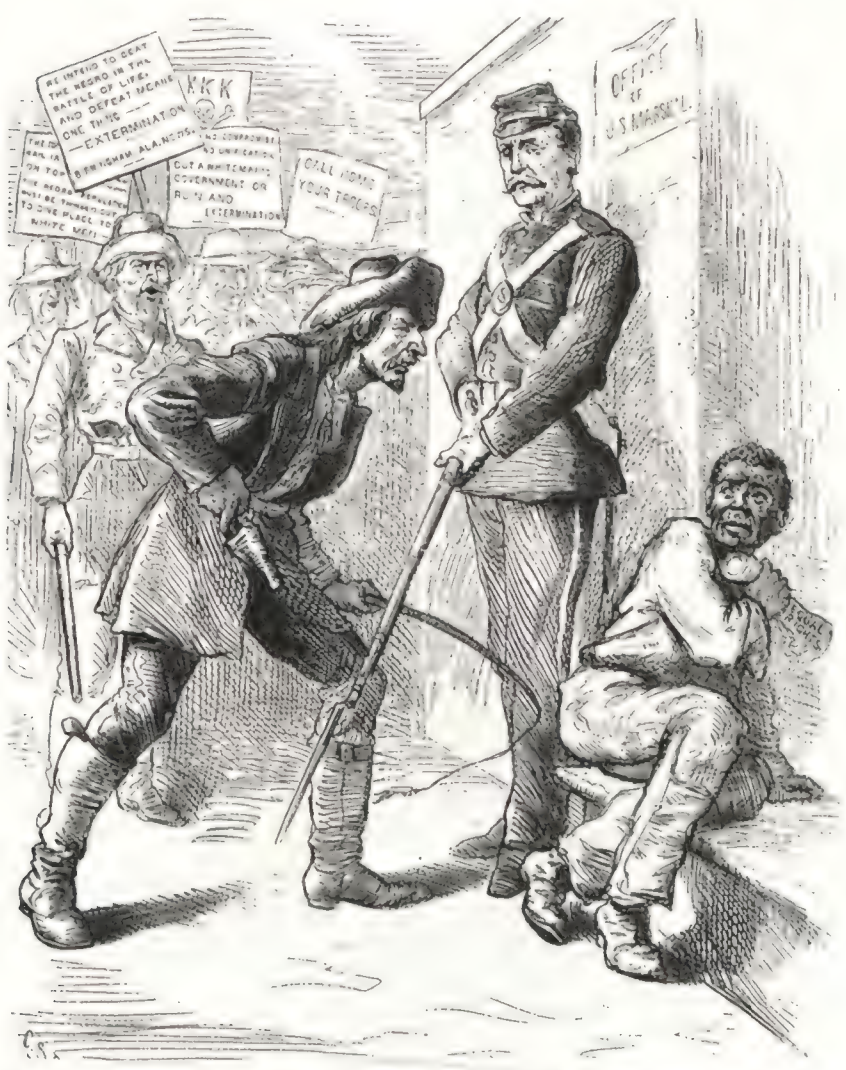
A Robertson deputy finally zeroed in on Burns by persuading his wife that he was a business associate of her husband's. Thus disarmed, she let drop the fact that Burns was visiting a friend in Virginia. The deputies secured a warrant, assembled a posse and went to Virginia. They surrounded the house and shouted to Burns to surrender, nailing him as he tried to flee out the back door, and carried him triumphantly back to Ohio. Congress belatedly acknowledged the need for a special agency to combat coneymen by creating the Secret Service for that purpose in 1865.

Though nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate, marshals were local men, usually with good political connections. They picked their own deputies and eked out a living on fees and expenses parsimoniously doled out from Washington. (Regular salaries weren't authorized until 1896.) When the laws they enforced clashed with local sentiment, as often happened, they were caught between their sympathies and their duty. With few exceptions—many Southern marshals resigned when the Civil War broke out—they hewed doggedly to duty.

The struggle over slavery put marshals under great pressure. After a law defining the banned African slave trade as piracy was passed in 1819, marshals were assigned the responsibility of enforcing it. That meant

In *Harper's Weekly* illustration, moonshiners get ready to ambush marshals (lower right) raiding distilleries.

After one band of Montana Coxeyites stole a train, federal marshals stepped in to arrest the robbers.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BY FORCE, ALA. NOW
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I CALL HOME YOUR TERROR
OFFICE OF U.S. MARSHAL

Soldier protects a freedman, seeking the haven of marshal's office, from the violence of a racist mob.

working with the Navy to intercept slave ships off the Southern coast. Though vessels were seized occasionally, Africans taken into custody met with an uncertain fate. Some were auctioned after a judge declared them confiscated property. And marshals who tried to bring the slavers to justice often met with local opposition.

The Fugitive Slave Law, passed in 1850 as a concession to the South, propelled Northern marshals into the middle of a series of violent imbroglios. Massachusetts marshal Watson Freeman, serving in a state where abolitionist sentiment ran high, tried to maneuver quietly when pursuing escaped slaves, but it didn't always work. In 1854 his deputies seized a fugitive slave named Anthony Burns who was working at a secondhand clothing store in Boston. The marshal placed Burns under guard at the courthouse while abolitionists launched a legal delaying action to keep him in Massachusetts. When the court moves failed they decided to kidnap him.

The abolitionists stormed out of a mass meeting at Faneuil Hall and laid siege to the courthouse, finally breaking through a wooden door with a battering ram. Shots were exchanged and deputy James Batchelder fell dead, but Freeman and several others managed to repel the mob. Boston police and militiamen arrived and arrested 18 of the rioters. Freeman then deputized a detachment of troops to guard Burns, who was ordered back to Virginia.

The poor fugitive was marched to the docks and onto a Norfolk-bound ship the next day, in the midst of an escort party including 60 volunteers, militiamen, two companies of marines and a cannon. Eventually the arrested rioters were released, prompting a howl from the U.S. Attorney that "fanaticism is so rampant here that murder of an U.S. Officer is held justifiable."

The good guys didn't always win

But it was the West that was the real killing ground for marshals—the films have that much right. "The movies all follow the same pattern," says historian Calhoun. "First the marshal pins on his badge and explains the law. Then he straps on his guns, raises a posse, has a shoot-out, wins it, quits, and rides off." The reality was that the good guys sometimes lost the shoot-out, and that they often spent ragged, underpaid weeks and months in chases that produced nothing but saddle sores. At one time or another marshals high-tailed it after Jesse James in the Midwest, Billy the Kid (who killed three deputies) in New Mexico, and Butch Cassidy's Hole-in-the-Wall Gang in Wyoming, but all escaped federal justice en route to the violent ends we've seen on film.

Fact and fiction came closest to coinciding in the Indian Territory, which later became Oklahoma. A

A trio of famous lawmen: Frederick Douglass (left), the first black marshal; Heck Thomas (center), gritty Western manhunter who died of heart attack in 1912; Wyatt Earp, whose deeds fell short of his reputation.

total of 103 deputies were killed there between 1872 and 1896, roughly a quarter of the number slain throughout the marshals' history. Deputies operated like local sheriffs in the Indian Territory. Other territories, such as Arizona and Wyoming, acquired local lawmen when they organized themselves as a step toward statehood; until then the marshals were the law. One source of confusion, especially for today's audiences, is the fact that Western hamlets often had town marshals, local policemen who lacked federal authority.

Indian Territory justice was dispensed in Fort Smith, Arkansas, by U.S. District Judge Isaac Parker, the celebrated "hanging judge" who sent 88 men to the gallows. The deputies who "rode for Parker" and who later policed the new Oklahoma Territory became frontier legends, as did the outlaws they pursued—the Daltons, Belle Starr, Bill Doolin, Ned Christie. With its surprise canyons and unpeopled prairies, the country patrolled by single-minded lawmen like Heck Thomas, Chris Madsen and Uncle Billy Tilghman was described by a Fort Smith newspaper as the "rendezvous of the vile and wicked from everywhere."

Heck Thomas was the prototypical Western marshal. He was a no-nonsense, nose-to-the-ground sort who wore a droopy mustache and two ivory-handled pistols. Since deputies were paid a fee for each suspect they caught, Thomas often brought them in wholesale. He once rode into Fort Smith with 32 prisoners in tow, 9 of whom were later convicted of capital crimes. The penny-pinching Justice Department nickel-and-dimed him to distraction. It ignored his request to transport fugitives by train instead of wagon even after he showed that the faster rail trip would save money overall; the clerks saw only the higher fares. If a deputy delivered a corpse instead of a live captive, he forfeited both his $2 fee and his mileage allowance.

Thomas went after the marshal-killer Ned Christie, wounding him in a shoot-out, and pursued the train-robbing Dalton brothers, two of whom had served as deputies before turning to crime. Deputies caught up with Christie in his hideout where they blasted him with a barrage including cannonballs and dynamite, which drove him outside into a blizzard of bullets. The lawmen then propped the defunct Ned on a board, his rifle still resting in his arms, for a postfight group photograph (p. 120).

Bob and Grat Dalton were killed after robbing a bank in Coffeyville, Kansas, but their ex-partner Bill Doolin stayed ahead of Thomas for four years. Thomas finally got him in his sights after diligent legwork led him to the outlaw's prairie hideout. Doolin came out of the house in bright moonlight and walked warily toward the spot where Thomas and a posse of deputies hid. Heck shouted out, demanding his surrender, but the desperado spun and opened fire with his Winchester. Thomas matter-of-factly reported that he then "got the shotgun to work and the fight was over."

Calhoun awards the prize for the most overblown reputation among frontier lawmen to Wyatt Earp. "He was a bum," the historian says, "not a crook but a

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JAGUAR
A BLENDING OF ART AND MACHINE

gambler. The Earps were greedy, and they saw law as a way to make money." Wyatt's brother Virgil was a deputy marshal in Tombstone, Arizona Territory. Wyatt became bitter when he lost out in a bid for sheriff of Cochise County. He apparently secured a commission as a deputy marshal after Virgil was wounded in an ambush, and wheedled $3,000 out of his boss on the pretext that he was pursuing bandits. He spent the money avenging Virgil and their murdered brother, Morgan, and settling personal scores, killing two men in the process, then fled to Colorado. He managed to avoid accounting for the money despite years of bureaucratic hounding.

Marshals played a conspicuously unheroic role in the tumult that marked the emergence of the American labor movement. With the government usually allied with management, marshals were frequently transformed into strikebreakers. Confronting what they viewed as anarchy, members of the executive branch also ignored the separation of powers principle by joining forces with federal courts to suppress strikes. Marshals were their weapons.

The ragtag "army" of unemployed men that Jacob Coxey led to Washington in 1894 wanted a public works program, not a revolution. Coxey's followers numbered only about 500 in the capital and around 10,000 nationwide, but the government response was raw force, albeit with an occasional comic overtone. When 500 Montana Coxeyites hijacked a train, the local marshal hastily deputized about 75 men and gave chase in another train. When the federals' express finally overtook the renegades, the Coxeyites refused to surrender, and the chase resumed. After the two trains chugged into Billings, a melee broke out and shots were fired, but the protest train steamed off once again. At that point President Grover Cleveland dispatched six infantry companies who found the train stopped, its passengers exhausted, in the little town of Forsyth, Montana. The troops arrested 331 men, 43 of whom served short jail terms.

The Pullman Strike a few weeks later was an uglier demonstration of federal muscle. Led by Eugene Debs, the newly formed American Railway Union struck the Pullman rail car company in Pullman, Illinois, to protest wage cuts and other grievances. The government, citing interference with the movement of mail

Outlaw Ned Christie is propped up on a board for ghoulish group photograph after a posse armed with dynamite and a small cannon blasted him out of a crude log fortress that he had erected high on a hill.

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Actor James Arness strikes a classic pose as Marshal Matt Dillon, hero of long-running *Gunsmoke* TV series.

(though the strikers were boycotting only Pullman cars), obtained an injunction against the union. Five thousand men, many of them thugs in the employ of the railroads, were deputized as temporary marshals to break the strike. When they proved ineffectual, federal troops were ordered into action over the protest of Illinois Governor John Peter Altgeld. The sporadic rioting was quelled and the union was eventually forced to capitulate.

By the turn of the century, marshals had proved their versatility but they were still a force without a center; each marshal dealt individually with the Justice Department and ran his own office. The post remained a patronage job in an age when professionalism and specialization were on the rise. After the Bureau of Investigation (later the FBI) was created in 1908, its agents became the glamour boys of law enforcement. Shorn of frontline duties, the 20th-century heirs of David Lenox and Heck Thomas became bailiffs and process servers. Howard Safir, associate director for operations at the Marshals Service headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, grew up thinking of marshals as "guys in size 48 Short coats from Sears."

It was the civil rights movement that ultimately restored the luster to the marshal's star. When the courts and Congress decreed an end to segregation in schools, polling places and public facilities, the marshals returned to the front lines, this time to enforce those orders. Between the late 1950s and late '60s, marshals were present at many of the landmarks of the civil rights drive: they escorted black first-graders to school in New Orleans, rode with "freedom riders" and marched from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, to protect Martin Luther King jr. And it was marshals who stood off a mob of segregationists at the most explosive confrontation of that era, the riot at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, on the night of September 30, 1962.

Torn between conflicting loyalties

Attorney General Robert Kennedy had ordered a detachment of 122 marshals, supplemented by specially deputized Border Patrol officers and federal prison guards, to the Ole Miss campus to guarantee the enrollment of James Meredith as the school's first black student. Several previous attempts to register Meredith had been blocked by state officials, led by Governor Ross Barnett. Marshals were assigned to keep the peace, with soldiers and National Guardsmen to be held in reserve. Many of the marshals, Southerners themselves, had their doubts about forcing desegregation on Mississippi, but as deputy Al Butler put it, "We all thought that when you took the oath and put on the badge you did the job."

Clad in prison-made orange vests and white helmets, and equipped with side arms, tear gas and clubs, the marshals stationed themselves around the university administration building, called the Lyceum. Meredith, unbeknownst to the crowd that began to gather in early evening, was already in a dormitory room in the company of several marshals. The crowd began taunting the marshals, calling Butler "Smiley"—"and a lot of other things"—for his good-humored expression. "I figured smiling would worry them more than anything else," he recalls.

By 8 P.M. the mob's mood had turned menacing. More than 1,000 whites—the number eventually reached 3,000—surged toward the line of helmeted men and lobbed rocks and bricks at them. One marshal and then another went down. Those who were equipped with side arms had been ordered to hold their fire. A cameraman in the crowd was chased and badly beaten. Finally, when the mob pressed forward, the defenders fired tear gas. "It went back and forth," the now-retired Butler recalls. "They'd charge, we'd fire tear gas and go after them with clubs and grab a few, then they'd regroup."

Suddenly gunfire erupted. The marshals took cover behind cars and the trucks of National Guardsmen, who had arrived as reinforcements. The Army troops still had not appeared. "We took shotgun fire first and

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Marshals take spy Christopher Boyce from courthouse in Seattle after his arrest following a long manhunt.

then rifle fire," Butler remembers. "That was the worst time. One of my men was critically wounded in the neck. We couldn't see where the shots were coming from. Three or four of us went into a grove to look for the rifleman but we couldn't find him. If we had, I'm not too damned sure I would have obeyed the Attorney General's orders." Two men, a French journalist and a young Mississippian who was there as a spectator, died of gunshot wounds. The reporter had been marched to an isolated corner of the campus and murdered.

The marshals fired volley after volley of tear gas against the mob's charges. One man tried to ram the Lyceum with a bulldozer; another group tried to turn a fire hose on the federal men. Even so, the marshals continued to keep their powder dry. "If we'd fired, there would have been a lot of killing on both sides," Butler believes. At 2 A.M. Army troops finally arrived and cleared the campus. Six hours later Meredith registered as an Ole Miss student and headed for his first class—Colonial American History. The toll among the 552 federal officers who took part was 180 wounded (27 by gunfire) but no fatalities.

The men in the "48 Short" Sears jackets had shown courage and restraint under fire. Five were cited for bravery. Teams of marshals guarded Meredith 24 hours a day for the year and a half he remained at Ole Miss. "He was never out of our sight," recalls Frank Vandegrift, who commanded the detail. "We all took a lot of heat—they threw cherry bombs and bottles at us and abused us regularly—but Meredith took twice as much verbal harassment as we did."

Their performance at Oxford gave the marshals an infusion of pride that helped them find their 20th-century identity. They finally established a central headquarters and in 1969 reorganized as the U.S. Marshals Service, a bureau of the Department of Justice. Headquarters took over managing the budget and hiring and training deputies, jobs that generations of district marshals had handled autonomously. A year later the Justice Department entrusted marshals with the protection of witnesses in organized-crime cases, a delicate operation that involves the creation of new identities in another locale for witnesses who fear reprisals. Five thousand witnesses and their families have in effect reinvented their lives under the marshals' protection, and they continue to enter the program at a rate of about one a day.

Marshals plucked an even juicier plum in 1979 when they were given responsibility for pursuing federal fugitives, an assignment that had belonged to the FBI for half a century. The marshals were still touchy about that upstart bureau. "The joke around the office," Stanley Morris says, "was that when the FBI made an arrest they got credit, of course, but when we did, the story credited 'federal agents.'" The dramatic escape of Christopher Boyce—in the celebrated "Falcon and the Snowman" espionage case—gave marshals a chance to prove themselves once and for all. It was a chance they almost blew.

After many dead ends, a breakthrough

"Boyce was crucial for us," says Howard Safir. "He was the first high-profile escapee after we got the fugitive job from the FBI. My nightmare was Boyce turning up in Moscow and holding a news conference. It would have been a disaster for us if we didn't catch him." Safir ramrodded a 19-month manhunt that hit dead ends in places as distant as South Africa and Costa Rica before it homed in on Boyce, with the aid of an informant's tip, in the Pacific Northwest. "We'd have a meeting every day and every day I'd ask the same question," Safir recalls. "Where is Christopher Boyce?" FBI agents joined the search amid muttering in Washington that they should never have yielded the fugitive-chasing charter.

The personable, articulate Boyce eventually turned

to bank robbery in Washington State and Idaho to keep himself going. He was living in Port Angeles, Washington, and taking flying lessons, apparently in anticipation of a flight to Siberia, when the net finally closed in August 1981. He was nabbed at a drive-in restaurant in Port Angeles while eating a hamburger. Safir was at home when he got the call: "The Falcon is in the cage," he was told. Boyce was initially confused about the identity of his captors. "Who are you guys, CIA?" he asked.

Safir regards the capture of Boyce as validation of the marshals' growing professionalism. "We still have a way to go, but we're light-years ahead of where we were," he says; "our guys won't tolerate the hangdog manner marshals used to have." "Our job is nothing more or less than insuring the integrity and security of the judicial system," Morris adds. "You need a sense of tradition and pride because of what you're asked to do, which sometimes means risking your life."

Today's marshals have five main duties: insuring federal court security, protecting witnesses, transporting prisoners (with the aid of two 727s and nine other planes, a squadron deputies call "Con-Air"), executing court orders and capturing fugitives. Budget and manpower levels are at an all-time high. Marshals supervised the recent exchange of U.S. and Soviet prisoners at Glienicke Bridge in Berlin. They have a SWAT team for emergencies. They even get their share of ink these days, especially when they pull off a clever caper like the 1985 sting in Washington, D.C. that lured 101 fugitives to a carefully staged bash promising free tickets to a Redskins football game. When the unsuspecting outlaws found out that the female cheerleaders, the tuxedoed master of ceremonies and even the reveler in the chicken suit were all armed marshals, one of them threatened to sue for false advertising.

But the fuzzy-image dilemma persists. When Director Morris toured the marshals' bicentennial exhibit on the eve of its opening, he noticed that a statue of former Chief Justice John Marshall stood between two corridors of displays. Without hesitation he stepped up to the plaque and placed his hand over the second *l*.

In his 1964 painting of marshals escorting a student to her desegregated school, Norman Rockwell captured the deputies' character as well as their determination—shiny badges, polished shoes, buttoned-up suit coats.

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By James H. Billington

Keeping the faith in the USSR after a thousand years

Lenin and his successors nearly snuffed out the church, but since 1964 the people have fought back with considerable candlepower

During the final months of 1931, Joseph Stalin gave the residents of Moscow a heart-numbing lesson in cultural terrorism. Under his orders, the largest and most richly decorated church in all of Russia—the Church of Christ the Savior, near the Kremlin—was systematically demolished. As Muscovites watched silently, countless holy pictures, 48 marble reliefs and 177 marble tablets were destroyed, and each of its 5 domes blown up including the edifice's 335-foot-high central dome. Stalin planned to erect, in place of the church, the Palace of Soviets; it would be topped with a giant statue of Lenin, symbolizing the victory of atheistic Communism over Orthodox Christianity.

But Stalin's palace was never built, and an atheist victory is no longer proclaimed in the USSR. In fact, a remarkable turnabout has occurred. The most popular celebrations of 1988 were those commemorating not atheism, but 1,000 years of the very Christianity that Stalin sought to destroy. A millennium earlier—in 988—Prince Vladimir of Kiev had introduced Orthodox Christianity into his domain. Last year the people, the priesthood and even government officials made it very clear that, in the Soviet Union, 988 is still a date to remember.

A high point of the Russian Orthodox Church's

At Pechory Monastery in Pskov, monks carry on as they have since 1473; tower, upper left, dates from 1565.

Photographs by Jerry Cooke

Zenon, a 35-year-old monk, paints icons in the Byzantine style of the old Orthodox Church masters.

The most celebrated living religious painter in the USSR, he works in a cottage at Pechory Monastery.

millennial celebration was the first public showing of documentary footage of the blowing up of the Church of Christ the Savior. "I felt myself cleansed by making this film," confessed the producer from the state-controlled studio on that occasion. Rediscovering the beauty of the Christian past plays a cleansing role for many in Mikhail Gorbachev's Russia. Restoring the old seems almost to be a kind of moral prerequisite for moving on to something new.

I was fortunate enough to be in the USSR several times during 1987-88, as well as a quarter-century ago in 1964, which was a key year in the emergence of the religious restoration movement. In August 1987, I traveled about 4,000 miles by plane, train, car and boat to museums, monasteries and government offices, talking with artists, restorers, officials and others, to learn as much as I could about the movement.

I knew already that, in order to understand the strength of this resurgence, one had only to look back at the 1,000-year history of Christianity in Russia and the Ukraine, beginning with Prince Vladimir of Kiev. Like Gorbachev in 1988, he was a dynamic leader who rose through a bloody political system (he probably connived in his brother's murder). But Vladimir soon surprised everyone with a *perestroika* of his own: turning the warlike Eastern Slavs away from fighting Christian Byzantium and into adopting its religion and culture. Vladimir's people had been dazzled by the beauty of the churches and liturgy in Christian Constantinople. Vladimir converted, then pitched the pagan idols of Kiev into the Dnepr River, married the sister of the Byzantine co-emperors, and launched Russia's first crash project: transplanting the art and architecture of Constantinople to Kiev.

The first native head of the new Orthodox Church of the Eastern Slavs was soon able to describe Kiev as "a city glistening with the light of holy icons, fragrant with incense, ringing with praise and holy, heavenly songs." Vladimir's successors took these same, ornate

James H. Billington, a historian who specializes in Russian history and culture, is the Librarian of Congress. He is the former director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

churches and services north into the forests and on to the Arctic Ocean.

Christianity in the old Russian empire was the frontier faith of a colonizing people—adopted uncritically from a Byzantine world that claimed to have solved all doctrinal questions. The rugged new converts sought to beautify their churches and worship services rather than to discuss fine points of dogma. So they developed a "theology in pictures" rather than in words—filling their churches with frescoes, icons and candlelight, embellishing them in the northern climate with new, snow-shedding onion domes and tent roofs that differed from the hemispheric domes of the Mediterranean world to the south and the spires of Baltic Europe to the west.

A shift of power to Moscow

After the Mongols sacked Kiev in the mid-13th century, the center of political gravity of the Eastern Slavs moved from what is now the Ukraine to what is now Russia (from "Little" to "Great" Russia). Moscow eventually emerged as the new capital, and the new conveyer of Orthodox faith and art across the Siberian tundra to the Pacific—the Eastern frontier of Christendom. Russian Orthodox missionary activities reached Alaska in the 18th century and continued until the installation of an atheistic state following the Communist Revolution of 1917.

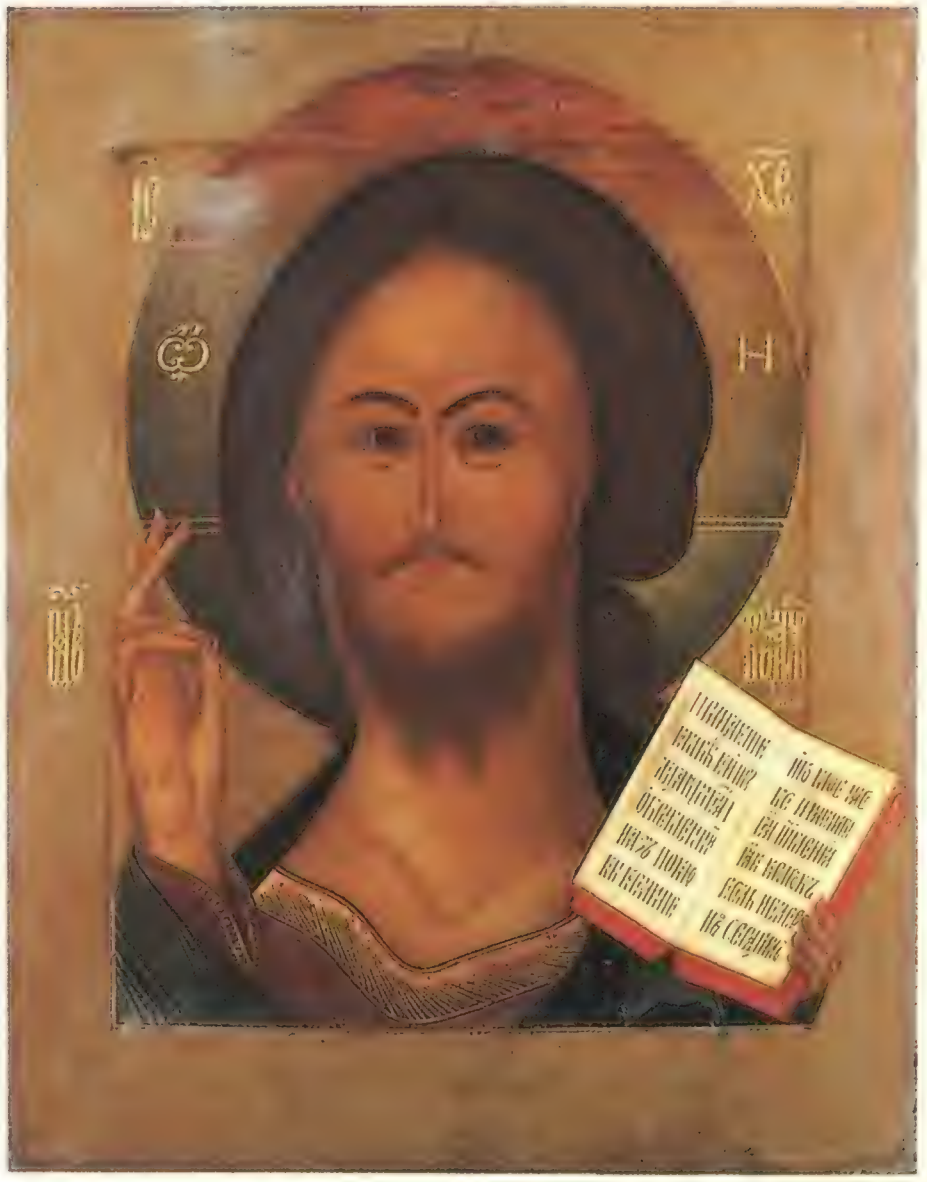
The new Communist rulers were bitterly opposed to a church that had been so closely identified with Czarist rule. They also feared a church that was enjoying an artistic and intellectual revival at the beginning of the 20th century; it had reestablished an independent Patriarch of Moscow, the first in more than 200 years, during the revolutionary upheaval of 1917.

Lenin and his successors tried in a variety of ways to destroy the Russian Orthodox Church (and all other religions). They first created an unsuccessful puppet "Living Church" in the 1920s. Then, in the '30s, Stalin unleashed a frontal attack under the "League of the Militant Godless" with massive murders, deportations and the organized destruction of churches. After a brief respite during and just after World War II, Nikita Khrushchev launched a new wave of persecution in the late 1950s that reduced the number of surviving churches to less than half and subjected the survivors to closer police surveillance.

But, as one early Communist tormentor of the Church noted, "religion is like a nail. The harder you hit it, the deeper it goes into the wood." The old chronicles had described Vladimir's emissaries as not knowing "whether we were in heaven or on Earth" upon first entering a Byzantine church. That same beauty seems to have haunted even many of the young post-Christian Communists sent by Khrushchev to finish the destruction of the churches. Writing in January 1964, in the official party journal, Khrushchev's top ideologist reflected on the failure of persecution. "The church in the provinces still seems to attract people, perhaps by the pomp and beauty of religious ceremonies [and] choir music," he wrote. "Architecture and painting also heighten the emotional effect."

That year, the people finally found their voice. After one of the most beautiful surviving wooden churches in Russia was burned down, the All-Russian Society for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments sprang into being (SMITHSONIAN, March 1983). Within a year, it had three million members, and it has continued growing into the largest voluntary society in the Soviet Union—with more than 45 million members spread throughout the country.

Also in 1964, a campaign began to recover Russia's scattered and depleted treasury of icons. Some 500 Moscow students scoured outlying regions in search of these sacred pictures, which expressed for a new generation something of the inspiration that they had held



Russian image of Christ, as in this old icon, is closer to humanity than in other traditions, says Zenon.

In her Moscow bedroom, widow of icon painter Pavel Korin sits before religious works her husband collected.

for the older Orthodox culture. And finally, again that year, the trial was held of a small group of "True Orthodox Wanderers," the first of the dissident Christian groups that fed into the broader human rights movement during the long, stagnant reign of Leonid Brezhnev from 1964 to 1983.

Two encounters in Moscow in 1964-65 gave me a sense of the continuing impact of the old religious culture on the new Communist society. A middle-aged graduate student in Russian religious art told me that he had been trained as an engineer but decided to change fields after he had been sent to blow up a church. Overwhelmed by the beauty of the frescoes, he chose to help recover his lost heritage rather than risk further collaboration in its destruction. And Nina Popova, a high and dedicated Communist official, expressed delight that I was working on "real Russian culture" when I explained to her my interest in Russian religion. She arranged for me to visit the state-supported studio of the late Pavel Korin (below). There, icons were displayed in the old manner with candles burning before them. Alongside was hung Korin's own long-labored painting of the last liturgy held in the Cathedral of the Assumption in the Kremlin before the Communists shut it down in 1918.

Guarded support from Communist leaders

That was a quarter-century ago; the momentum has continued and recently accelerated. During the millennial year of 1988, Communist leaders' guarded support for the celebrations often seemed to serve as a means of relegitimizing their authority with their own people. It all began with the decision of the now-denigrated Leonid Brezhnev to return the oldest monastic site in Moscow, the Danilov Monastery, to the Russian Church for the millennial observance. Gorbachev gave back several more church properties including the Optina Pustyn', a monastery that had attracted great writers like Gogol, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy. He also received Russian Orthodox leaders in the Kremlin for the first meeting between an Orthodox Patriarch and a Communist General Secretary since 1943. And Mrs. Gorbachev and two alternate members of the ruling Politburo took part in the semiofficial commemoration of the millennium in the Bolshoi Theater in June.

Whatever the future legal status and spiritual vitality of Russian Orthodoxy may prove to be, the change in attitude toward that church's artistic and architectural legacy has been far-reaching, perhaps irreversible, and generally welcomed by people of other faiths—and of no faith—throughout the USSR. But how can this religious heritage work its way back to visibility in the USSR, where past destruction and neglect have been so great and where present, pressing

Two 16th-century icons, *Saint Nicholas* and *Praising the Holy Virgin*, are being restored by N. I. Fedyshin.

Once a young Communist who helped raze churches, S. P. Kalashnikov now builds scale models of them.

economic needs tie up almost all resources? The answer lies in people: little people far from the centers of power, working largely with their own hands. In 1987, I visited three such artists at their places of work, far from the big centers of Leningrad and Moscow.

The 35-year-old monk Zenon is the most celebrated living religious painter in the USSR. His studio in western Pskov—like that of Russia's first icon painters in medieval Kiev—is in a monastery built around caves. The Pechory Monastery was established in the 14th century over a catacomb; at that time, it lay on the exposed Western frontier of Orthodox Christendom. Zenon is a far cry from the stereotype of a white-haired, elderly monk half-buried in a cave. He is a sparkling young man working above ground in a brightly lit new cottage, aided by several even-younger apprentices.

Here Zenon is reviving the old, pure style of icon painting, where the figures are dematerialized ideal forms and the very act of painting them is viewed as a kind of worship. For more than a dozen years, he has created new versions of the old holy pictures for churches in his native Odessa, in the great St. Sergius and the Holy Trinity Monastery in Zagorsk, where he studied for seven years, and in his home monastery in Pskov. Zenon also painted some of the key frescoes in Moscow's refurbished Danilov Monastery, where he met President and Mrs. Reagan at the time of the Moscow summit.

Zenon learned to paint icons by studying reproductions in books and trying his own hand at "sketching, not copying." Then, as he became immersed in the worship life of Orthodoxy, he began to see painting as "a part of prayer." He saw his own creativity being benefited rather than stifled by studying the icons of old masters—just as personal prayer benefits from using "an already prepared text" that distills centuries of inherited spiritual experience. His sources of inspiration are modern as well as ancient; in his studio I saw a photograph of the late Alexander Shmemann, the American Orthodox theologian long featured in Radio Liberty broadcasts to the USSR. There was also a portrait of two long-proscribed Russian Orthodox thinkers from the beginning of this century: Sergius Bulgakov, who fled to Paris, and Pavel Florensky, who was murdered in Stalin's gulag.

Speaking softly, with an infectious, persistent smile, Zenon blended in with the muted gold background and soft colors of his own icons. A particularly striking one depicted Christ holding a Bible open to the passage from Saint Matthew: "Come unto me all you who travail and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Such icons (p. 133) appear over the "royal doors" in the center of the icon screen of most Russian churches.

One of Zenon's clerical colleagues described him to me as "a pure monk of the kind that is rare in any age." He is more an example than a preacher, but he had a ready response to my question about the most critical problem in the world today. "The absence of love," he said, in a way that did not sound platitudinous at all. He clearly found that love in the figure he was painting during my visit. With a certain quiet pride, he told me that "though each epoch sees a different face of Christ," the image of Christ in Russian art at its best was "softer and closer" to humanity than in most other artistic traditions.

From Pskov I traveled north and east to Vologda to meet Nicholas Fedyshin, an icon restorer at the Vologda Regional Museum of Local Studies. His work, like Zenon's, is an act of devotion. In his charge in the museum's cavernous cellars are 3,500 old religious paintings. Still largely untouched, they were taken from churches that were either deactivated or destroyed

Soviet tourists pass into Ferapontov Monastery through its well-maintained 17th-century tower entrance.

in the early Soviet period; it would take him and his small staff another millennium to restore them all.

Fedyshin's skills were handed down from his father, who worked in Vologda with a small band of craftsmen. Before the revolution, they were one of the groups that developed the modern technique for peeling away the soot encrustation that had obscured the rich original colors of the older icons. Now, Fedyshin's son is already working with him, carrying the tradition forward into a third generation.

Fedyshin has worked continuously since the death of his father in 1941. In 1978, 60 of the restored icons were exhibited, making him the first restorer in the USSR to be permitted a one-man exhibition of his work. Although Fedyshin continues to gain recognition, he still has little help. He is also unwilling to discuss either his past sufferings or his personal faith, perhaps indicating the continuing fear of a return to Stalinist or Khrushchevian repression that might reverse the slow progress of recent years.

Earlier, I mentioned that many of the young Communists sent out to destroy old churches were deeply affected by the beauty that they found. Into this category falls S. P. Kalashnikov, an octogenarian who lives and works in Arctic Arkhangel'sk. A former Young Communist League activist, he has, for ten years, been building huge scale models of old Russian architectural centers that have long since been destroyed. What makes this bizarre is that his careful, often beautiful, reconstructions sometimes depict the very buildings that he himself helped demolish during the antireligious campaigns of the 1930s.

Models of churches that no longer exist

No contrast could be more striking than that between the monotonous, concrete structures of contemporary Arkhangel'sk and the variegated beauty of the old city he has reconstructed—with all its churches that no longer exist. I asked him if he did not regret the demise of the old city. Not at all, he answered, suggesting that he had enjoyed the antireligious desecrations of his youth as much as he was evidently enjoying the reconstructions of his retirement years. (Later, however, in a conversation with our photographer, he described his work as an act of repentance.)

Kalashnikov's enormous scale model of old Arkhangel'sk fills much of the main hall of the Palace of Culture of the Sailors of the North Sea Fleet. Alongside it, he has recently added a new model: it is the former Solovetsk Monastery on the White Sea, which was transformed into one of the worst gulags during the initial Soviet years.

It is a surviving alumnus of that very prison camp at Solovetsk, Dmitry Likhachev, who now leads the effort to recover the Russian past. This 82-year-old, Leningrad-based expert on Old Russian culture has been a lifelong opponent of the destruction of old buildings in the USSR. In the Gorbachev era, he has rapidly risen to become a TV and newspaper commentator on this issue. His star began to rise after Gorbachev answered one of his written complaints with a personal phone call. Then, in 1986, he was elected to be the first chairman of the Cultural Fund, a new nationwide organization for the promotion and preservation of cultural artifacts. Gorbachev's wife, Raisa, became a member of the board of this fund, thereby breaking the precedent of wives of party bosses remaining largely anonymous and out of public view.

Likhachev pulls no punches. He is an outspoken critic of the xenophobic wing of the historic restoration movement, typified by key figures in the Pamyat'

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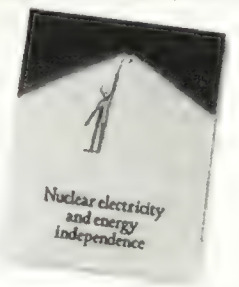

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Icon depicting Christ's entry into Jerusalem, 1497, is among treasures of Kirillov Monastery near Vologda.

Church interior at Ferapontov—here, Saint Nicholas—was painted by artist Dionysius and his sons in 1502.

(Memory) organization. He distinguishes patriotism, which he considers positive, from nationalism, which he sees as a negative force invariably directed against someone else. Other recent targets are those who demonstrate what he calls the "Chernobyl syndrome"—attempting first to conceal and then to downplay cultural disasters. There was, for example, the fire in February 1988 in the Leningrad library of the Academy of Science; it destroyed 400,000 volumes and damaged 3 million more. That, says Likhachev, was a case of inadequate protection of the national heritage.

If Likhachev is a kind of high priest of the restoration movement, the glorious frescoes of the Ferapontov Monastery may be its ultimate shrine. There, by a quiet lake in the northern countryside between Vologda and Arkhangel'sk, a team of restorers is huddled over a swirling sea of light blue, lavender, soft yellow and pink images that fills the interior of the Cathedral of the Nativity of the Virgin. These 114 distinct frescoes may come as close to depicting the heavenly world as mortal man can attain (below). They were painted by the artist Dionysius and his three sons in a mere 34 days in the late summer of 1502. To create this masterpiece, the artists superimposed 50 different colors on a special limestone whitewash.

Following in the believer's footsteps

At Ferapontov, I noticed once again that special reverence seemed to mark the restoration work in progress. The curator in charge, Marina Serebriakova, was both reverent and scholarly. As she guided me through the church, she softly recited the *akathistoi*, or hymns to the Virgin, which the main frescoes illustrate; and she controlled our movements in order to approximate those of a believer in the days when the church was still active (it had been confiscated by a state farm in the early Soviet days).

The long drive to Ferapontov from Vologda had reminded me of the limits of the current Soviet restoration attempts. As the car sped past Kubensky Lake, I could barely make out in the distant mist the island that contained the remains of the oldest of all northern monasteries. Dating from the 12th century, the Monastery of the Savior-in-Stone (Spas-Kamenny) had also, like Ferapontov, been decorated with frescoes by Dionysius. Apparently, little is left but the shell of the old bell tower, a result of deliberate destruction in the mid-1930s and complete neglect since. My inquiries about this church were met with embarrassed silence.

A similar thing happened when I asked to see the restoration of the famous 16th-century frescoes at the Monastery of Sviazhsk near Kazan. My request was turned aside with a variety of sometimes contradictory explanations. I was variously told that the restorations

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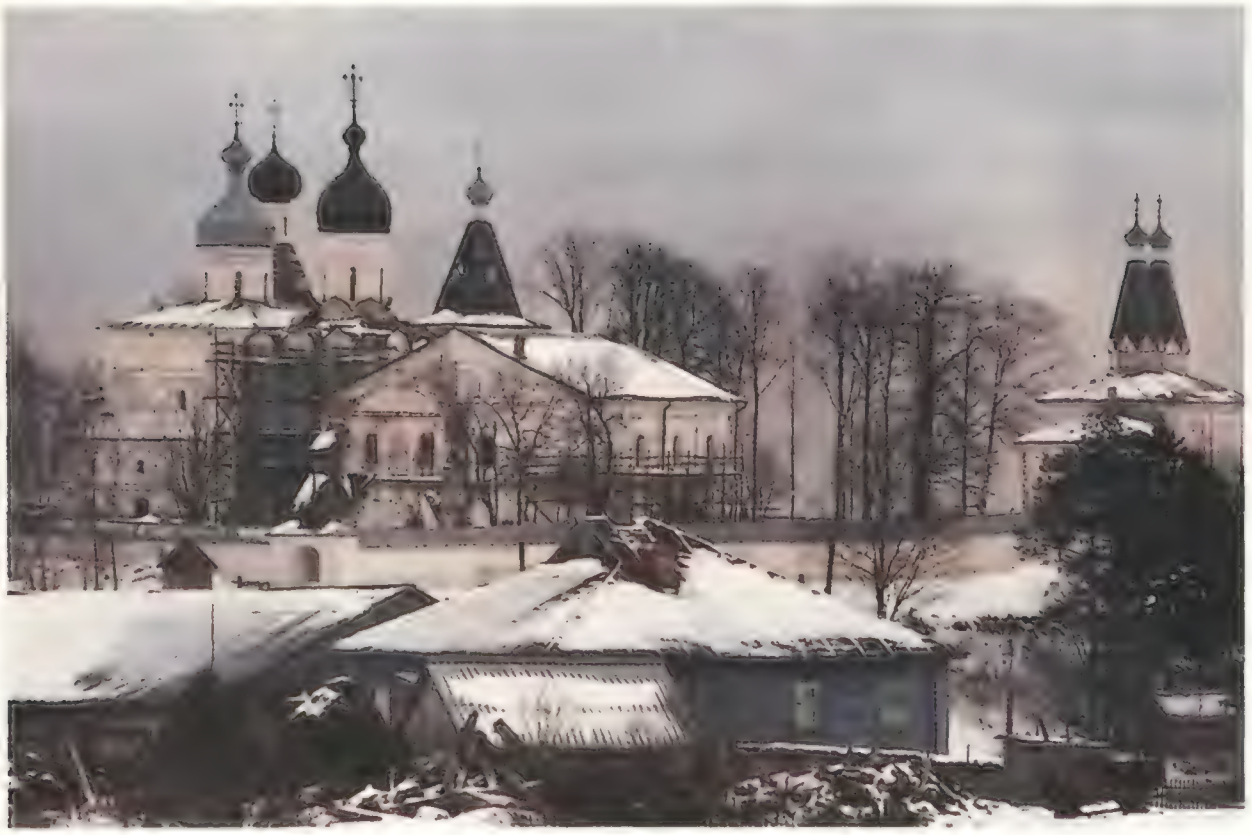

The scaffolding attests to ongoing restoration of the Ferapontov Monastery near Vologda. At left is the Cathedral of the Nativity of the Virgin, which houses the frescoes of Dionysius. The tent roofs and onion domes of these buildings evolved in northern Russia.

were not complete, that the region was closed to foreigners, that the approaches were too muddy, and that the monastery had been used as a psychiatric hospital and/or prison. The 16th-century frescoes, painted by order of Ivan the Terrible to celebrate his victory over the Tatars in nearby Kazan, are said to have been recovered from under a 19th-century overlay. But neglect and water erosion may have damaged the church building itself, undermining the prospect of recovering this unique monument of a missionary Orthodox culture in the mid-Volga region.

Later in Kazan, however, I was taken by my genial host, the Tatar poet Renat Kharis, to see the historic restoration of the old village of Bulgari. This was the northernmost settlement of the rival Muslim colonizers, who extended their own missionary reach up the Volga during the 13th and 14th centuries. Peter the Great was the first leader to be fascinated with the possibility of reconstructing Bulgari, and there has been modest but steady progress since the opening of a museum there in 1969. A stately minaret and a series of half-ruined, small-scale palaces give the impression of an architecture in some ways closer to the medieval Christian Caucasus or the pre-Gothic medieval West than to the flamboyant majesty of Middle Eastern Islamic architecture. Local Tatar restorers are as proud of this heritage as ethnic Russians are of theirs. And the complaints have been the same: insufficient government attention to the heritage of the past, not just in the Soviet period but since the time of Peter the Great.

The resurgence of national pride among Muslims and other minority peoples of the multiethnic USSR puts even more pressure on those who are searching for roots within the dominant Russian nationality. The leadership of the USSR has never been more purely Russian, both in ethnic origin and in regional career patterns. The ethnic Georgian, Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, is the only non-Russian among the top leaders, and an unusually large number of them are from that most fiercely Russian of all regions: Siberia.

The far northeastern frontier of Siberia produced the most spectacular recovery of a forgotten ancient church: the 17th-century wooden Church of the Savior in Zashiversk. It was built some 350 miles northeast of Oymyakon, where the coldest temperature in any permanently inhabited place on Earth was once recorded (96 below in 1964). In 1969, an expedition up the frozen Indigirka River from Yakutsk discovered this church intact; other traces of the surrounding village had vanished, its population wiped out by the black plague in the early 19th century. Modern scientists in the USSR are no less interested than antiquarian humanists in the excavation and study of ancient monuments; the church was later taken apart and transported to the great scientific center of Novosibirsk.

It's not unusual in the USSR for old wooden buildings to be moved from remote northern locations to "museums under open skies" in big cities. Those living amid the concrete sterility of Soviet urban housing thirst for reminders of their more colorful past. The only place today in Arkhangel'sk or its surroundings, for instance, where people can encounter authentic elements of their religious past (other than Kalashnikov's

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On a typical Sunday in Moscow, a baby is christened in the Prokrovsky Cathedral of the Old Believers.

models) is the large Museum of Wooden Architecture. There, about 90 buildings, most of them dating from the 17th and 18th centuries, have been assembled in a beautiful natural setting. The decorative scheme on the ceilings of the small chapels contains hints of the pre-Christian paganism that was absorbed into Orthodox Christianity when it was brought north. Known as Nebo or "heaven," this octagonal decoration is ostensibly just another version of Byzantine iconography. Christ is at the center and eight elongated trapezoids containing saints radiate out—just as Christian truth was carried forth to the people from Christ through his faithful followers. But the symbolism also suggests rays from the sun—a central concept of the earlier cult of the Sun God in the cold and dark Russian north. In fact, the gold-gilt onion domes atop Russian churches also suggest the sun, reflecting light down through the dark northern forests from above the trees.

I felt a sense of joy traveling around the USSR visiting old churches and monasteries, meeting talented artists and scholars devoted to the restoration effort. But on return to Moscow, I was brought down to earth again when I interviewed Soviet officials. After discussing the problems of restoration with them in detail, I understood better why so many who are interested in old Russian religious culture continue to feel pessimistic about the prospects for continued progress. Minister of Culture Vasily Zakharov was clearly more interested in "popular culture" in traditional secular terms than in religious culture. The chief administrator of the new Cultural Fund, G. V. Miasnikov, outlined a preservation program that was heavy on recent war memorials and included only one church (and only because Pushkin happened to have been married there).

Even more disturbing because of his very sophistication was the semiofficial historian of the restoration movement, Yury Nikolaevich Zhukov, who met with me over tea in his well-furnished apartment near Red Square. He explained the destruction of the Church of Christ the Savior in a way that almost amounted to a justification—the building hadn't technically been old enough to qualify as a historical monument; it had been built in the eclectic, "false Byzantine" style; there were better memorials elsewhere.

What was offensive was not the arguments—each of which was individually defensible—but the evident contempt of this powerful figure for the powerless believers. "Of course, we wouldn't do this today," Zhukov pointed out; but he added that the current tendency of young people to go to church was largely a "form of bravado," and he characterized their demand that the state do more for church restoration as chiefly a way of "criticizing Soviet power." Yet even this deeply cynical foe of the old religious culture seemed anxious to legitimize himself by showing some personal sympathy for the restoration work of today, which, he said, involves "entire complexes rather than individual buildings" and ordinary people anxious to recapture "a more finely colored picture of the past."

For many of these ordinary people, a "finely colored picture of the past" requires extended exposure to old churches and to real icons: the kind that Nicholas Fedyshin and his son are restoring, that the monk Zenon and his pupils are creating anew, that S. P. Kalashnikov with his scale models is celebrating. It does seem that a generalized feeling of contrition over the destructiveness of the past will be a continuing legacy of the millennial celebration of Orthodox Christianity among the Eastern Slavs.

The profoundly antitotalitarian Soviet movie *Repentance,* which was made in the early 1980s but not released until 1986, has had considerable impact. It juxtaposes the crucifixion of a prisoner in the gulag with the blowing up of a church, as if to show that these two aspects of Stalin's crimes were interrelated. The movie begins and ends with complacent Soviet contemporaries eating a cake with little churches built into the icing, but at the very end an old woman appears and asks the way to the church. When she is told that there is no church anymore, she asks, "What is the use of a road if it doesn't lead to a church?"

From the highest onion dome to the lowest serrated eave, snow blankets a 17th-century church at Arkhangel'sk.

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Cheeky Yalemen made sport of Carry during a New Haven visit in 1902. The final indignity occurred when undergrads got the reformer to pose with them, then whipped out symbols of debauchery as picture was made.

By Robert Day

Carry from Kansas became a Nation all unto herself

Famous for laying waste to bars, she also pioneered a multitude of humane reforms

Today her notoriety and fame rest largely on the cartoon image she forged in the nation's press in the early 1900s: a long brass-rail bar lies wasted; broken glasses and bottles and split kegs festoon the floor; the bartender peeks up in front of a shattered mirror; a painting of a nude seems to have a hatchet cleft in it; worried patrons gather outside at the busted-out front window to see what's what; and in the middle of all this stands a huge-headed woman with a hatchet in her right hand and what appear to be pool-table stanchions for legs under a plain black skirt. The caption reads: "I cannot tell a lie—I did it with my little hatchet!"

In western Kansas not far from Kiowa, where in the early 20th century Carry A. Nation first wielded her hatchet in the service of saloon smashing, a local business has displayed a sign that reads: DAMM—Drunks Against Mad Mothers. Mrs. Nation would not be amused, although she might grudgingly admire the defiant stance the perpetrators profess. Carry Nation was defiance personified.

Known at the start of her career mainly as a leader of the women's temperance movement, Carry became an international figure. Her exploits at demolishing "joints," giving lectures, selling hatchets, publishing a weekly newspaper (*The Smasher's*

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Mail), being horsewhipped and getting tossed into jails all over the United States made her one of the most celebrated and talked-about women of her time.

Lost in the publicity of that time—and even today—are the notable and abiding ethical tenets that Carry Nation espoused. Among them: women don't have to endure beatings by drunken husbands; women don't have to see the wages meant for their families spent elsewhere; men don't have to form clubs and cliques based on sex and race, and then confirm the authority of such clubs by toasts and revelry; the homeless need a place to live; the young need sex education; alcoholism is a disease; smoking is bad for you; women have equal rights.

Like all extremists, Carry Nation was right to the point of being wrong. Some feminists think that between Prohibition and Carry's strident politics, women's rights got set back 50 years. Maybe so. But in her time Carry Nation indelibly laid upon the American conscience some nagging and largely unresolved questions about the use of drugs, the roles of men and women in marriage, not to mention the viability of direct political action. Carry was our century's first moral crusader; measured against her sense of "commitment," our latter-day moralists—majority or otherwise—are thin malt by comparison.

Born Carry Amelia Moore in Garrard County, Kentucky, on November 25, 1846, Carry was reared by a father who was first a planter and later an itinerant livestock trader, and a mother who frequently took herself to be Queen Victoria. The family decided the best course in regard to Carry's mother was to make the same assumption she did: slaves were occasionally dressed up as palace guards, the Queen's rooms were furnished with something like the trappings of royalty. Audiences were held, local farmers knighted and Prince Albert (Carry's father, George Moore, in his other life) consulted about the fate of the natives in such far-flung empires as Missouri and Texas.

There were other incidents of family oddity: an aunt got to thinking she was a weather vane; a male cousin decided in his 40s that the best method of locomotion was to return to all fours. He was finally talked out of it

As the nation saw her in 1900, Carry was a fierce, comic, cartoonable figure who has just laid waste a "joint."

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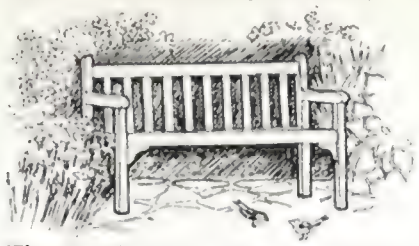

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Bar in Enterprise, Kansas, was a victim of Carry's "hatchetation."

by a minister who held his tête-à-têtes at ground level; and by Carry herself, who more or less lived with the family's black servants until she was 7, and was a special friend of Uncle Josh—a slightly mad, elderly black man who seemed to come and go in the house as he pleased. On the whole, life among the Moores was not the sane and stable influence that one hopes for in a future reformer—though it perhaps gave Carry some of the dramatic flair she later put to the service of her causes. It may also have given her license for the self-delusion that largely deprived her of serious consideration by the public, even that part of the public that was sympathetic to her most humane causes.

Although it is true that in some respects Carry Nation is the grandmother of our recent concern about the excessive use of drugs in general—and of alcohol in particular (as exemplified by the flourishing chapters of Mothers against Drunk Driving)—it seems clear in retrospect that her first and continuing impulse was to befriend the woebegone and homeless. In Medicine Lodge, Kansas, where she and her second husband, David Nation, settled in the 1890s, she was

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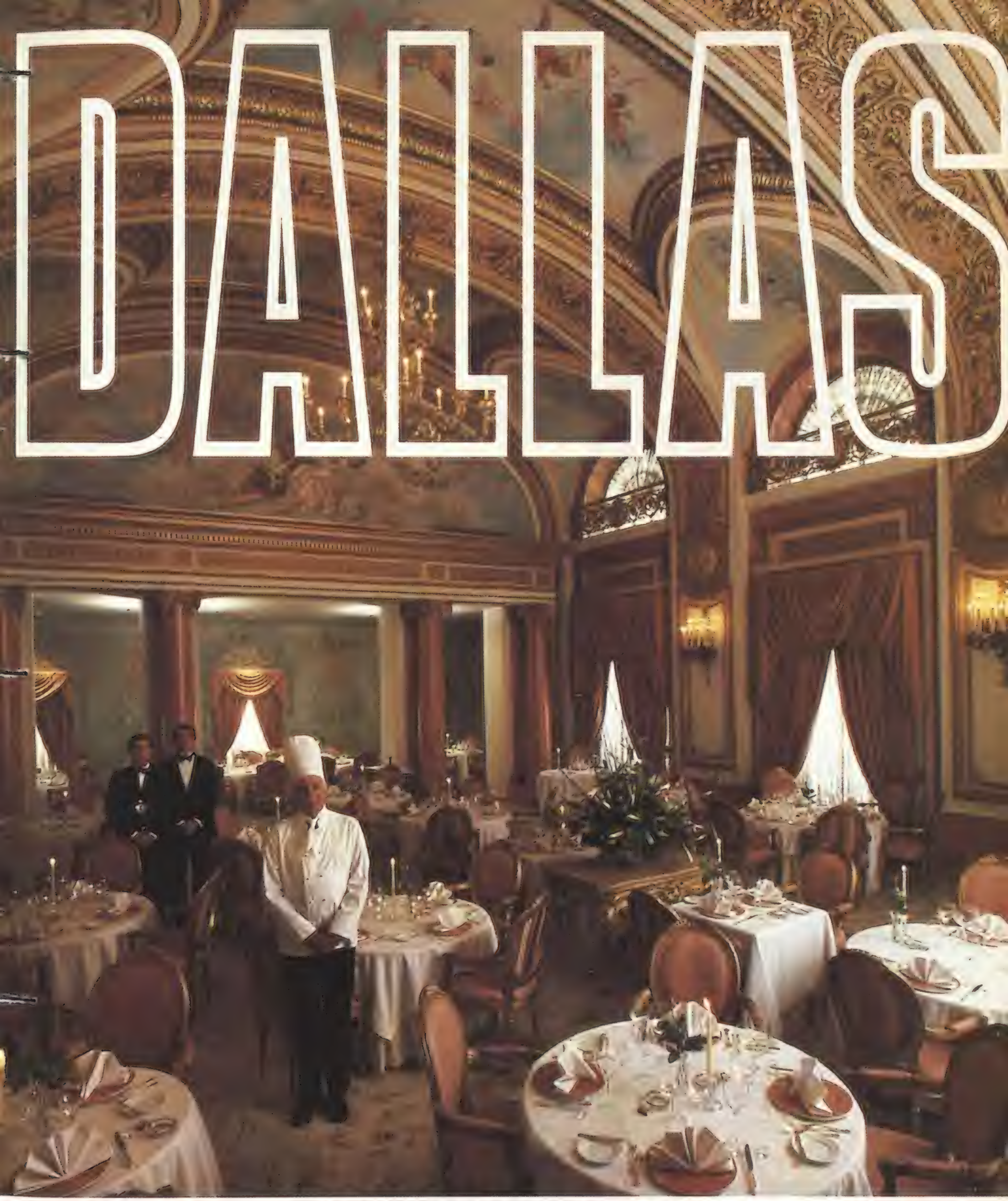

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known as "Mother Nation"—not a name of irony or derision, but one that celebrated her generosity. In Kansas, as in the years before in Missouri and Texas, Carry's instincts were to look out after the poor and battered, especially women. Medicine Lodge saw her establish a sewing circle to make clothes for the destitute. Her strong belief in education (she was once a teacher) led her to make it her business that few children in Medicine Lodge had to stay home from school for want of proper clothing. Thanksgiving and Christmas the downtrodden were invited into the Nation home for a generous feast. David Nation was at this time one of the town's preachers, and such hospitality was no doubt part of his calling. But even then Carry was more than just a preacher's wife. She had already developed a belief that the disadvantaged need practical care. And a voice.

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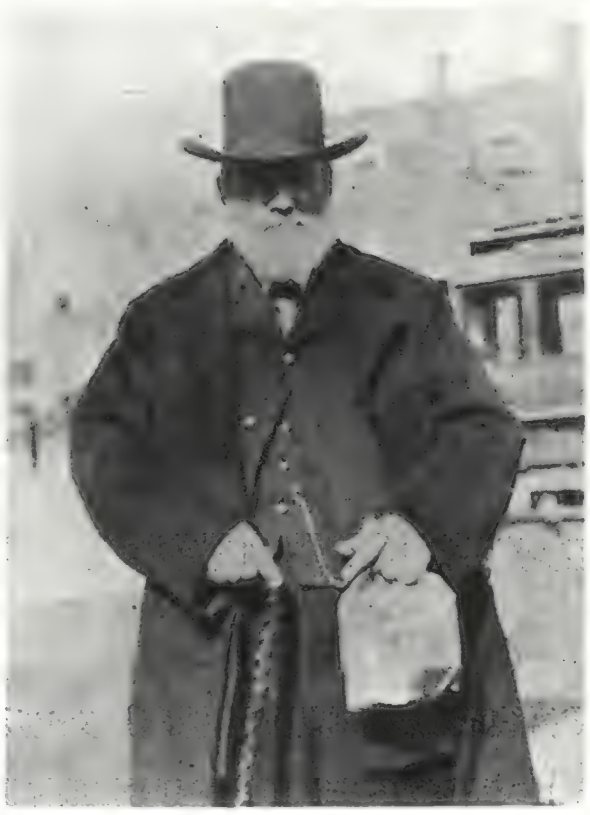

Her husband, David Nation, a journalist and preacher, was slack at all trades.

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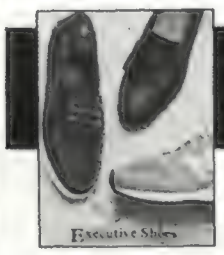

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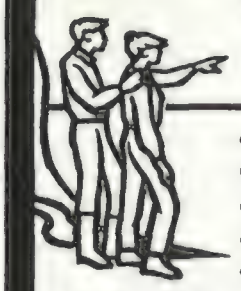

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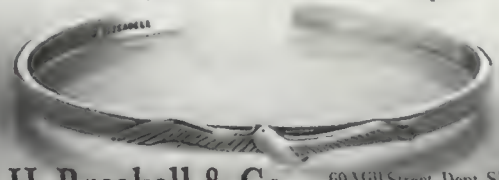

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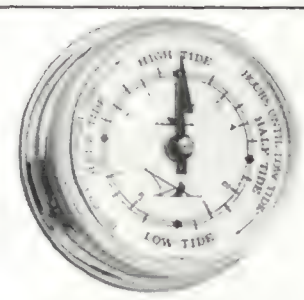

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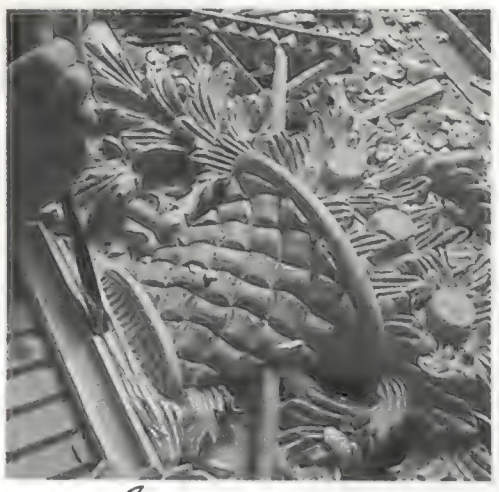

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Wrath) one of the best accounts of Carry's life and times.

Her autobiography, as well as independent documents, depict a woman who marched through the last third of her life with a dichotomous character forged in childhood. In her early youth she was sickly; as an adult she was an ox of physical strength. As a schoolgirl she was sometimes speechless; as a mature woman she was wicked with words. When a young lady, she became the sycophantic bride of a drunk; in old age, she ripped the cigars out of men's mouths.

Carry spent a year in bed during her girlhood nursing an unspecified illness labeled "consumption of the bowels" by a local doctor. Among the cures proposed was a kind of exorcism during which indigenous religious personages argued that unless Carry repented her youthful penchant for petty thievery around the Moore home, her illness would last a lifetime. She repented with gusto; so much so that in later years if she found an item in her house that was not hers and whose owner she could not locate, she would give it away rather than keep it. But if the remedy later took, it was no help at the time, and Carry stayed groaning in bed.

Next, the adults tried to cure Carry with a winter baptism in an ice-fringed creek. The ordeal gave her a head start on the visions she was to have throughout her life, but soon she was back in bed for much of the next three years. Nothing seemed to work but time: on one of her family's frequent moves, in this case from Texas to Missouri, poor Carry at age 15 seemed to simply grow out of her malady.

As a mature woman Carry Nation was anything but sickly. She was tall for a woman, and hefty, as strong as she was homely. Her physical prowess in tearing up saloons made splendid news copy from coast to coast. On one occasion she picked up a heavy iron cash register and tossed it into the street. She was good at flinging billiard balls, brickbats and hatchets. A

Early sketch, done in 1901, shows Carry with a hard-earned shiner.

bartender who planned to shoot her during one of her raids panicked and fired his pistol into the ceiling when he saw her rip the door off an ice chest. The bedridden days of her youth were redeemed with a vengeance in the prime of her life.

As a schoolgirl, Carry was once left shamed and speechless by the request of a teacher that she present one side of a debating topic (something to do with whether dogs and cats had reasoning faculties and therefore could go to Heaven). Carry was supposed to argue that they did and could. "When I was called," she wrote in her autobiography, "I know I looked ridiculously blank. . . . All [my classmates] burst out in uncontrollable laughter. I went to my seat, put my face in my arms and turned my back to the audience. I wept tears of humiliation. I felt disgraced. I thought of what a shame this would be to my parents. . . . These things nerved me. I dried my tears, turned around in my seat, looked up, and the moral force it required to do this was almost equal to that which smashed a saloon." Pets found their way to Heaven.

Her resolve to be always prepared to make her case lasted into later life. At the height of her career, Carry

Nation was an extraordinary speaker, able to hold throngs spellbound by both her message and her delivery. On behalf of the temperance movement, she toured not only the United States but England and Scotland as well. At worst, she was something of a sideshow (she once lectured at Coney Island). At best, she could swap insults like pistol fire and ambush the unlucky. Among such unfortunates were Mrs. Alfred Vanderbilt and other women in her party at a Madison Square Garden horse show in the fall of 1902. The issue was extravagant dress; no doubt the Vanderbilts were fashion plates for the event. But after a lifetime of raising money to clothe the poor and of helping to house the homeless, and with more than a modicum of moral indignation over what Carry thought was wrongheaded behavior and just plain "setting a bad example," she lit into the hapless social and financial lions as they sat peacefully in their reserved box hoping to watch the horses prance.

"You think you are well dressed," said Carry, standing before the startled women, "but you ought to be ashamed of yourselves for wearing such disgraceful clothes. Take them off at once and dress yourselves more modestly."

But the tirade didn't stop there. Carry, at the time a figure whose glowering physiognomy was recognized on the streets of New York by public and press alike—began wandering around Madison Square Garden searching for more affronts to her sensibility. As she did so, she gathered an entourage of bemused onlookers as well as the New York press. Like their Kansas counterparts, the New York reporters regularly spelled her name "Carrie," and they would gleefully steer her to the nearest saloon in order to write a firsthand account of the carnage that was sure to follow. As she toured, Carry delivered a running monologue about the various evils: drink, excessive dress, the devil in general. This from a woman who had once burst into tears when asked to recite in class.

Replicas of Carry's "little hatchet" were sold widely as souvenirs.

Perhaps the most significant instance in which Carry's crusading character was formed by her early life was her first marriage. At age 19 she fell in love with one Dr. Charles Gloyd, a sot who managed to hide

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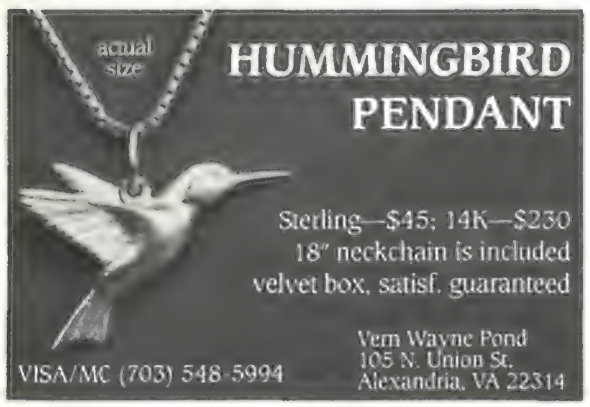

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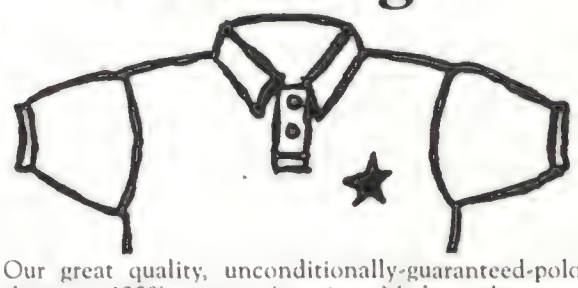

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the full flower of his condition until after they were married. Gloyd was a boarder at the Moore home in Missouri. His idea was to take a position in a nearby school until he could decide where in the area he might like to set up medical practice. All this seemed reasonable enough—except to Carry's mother, Queen Victoria. In a moment of clarity she spotted Dr. Gloyd for what he was and issued a Royal proclamation that the two should never be alone together. It worked, sort of.

One day during the two-year courtship, Gloyd caught his future bride in the house and gave her a kiss. Carry screamed, "I am ruined! I am ruined!" As was her lifelong penchant, she had overstated the case. In fact, she apparently rather liked the physical attention. From then on (the Royal ban was still in effect) the two conducted their affair by leaving notes for each other in the Moores' copy of Shakespeare. They dropped hints as to where the messages could be found by commenting at the dinner table on what passages they had been lately reading, and in the end were married—apparently without the Queen's blessing.

Gloyd was drunk at his wedding. Carry notes that when they were married ". . . his countenance was not

During the first of her many stints in jail, Carry studies the Bible.

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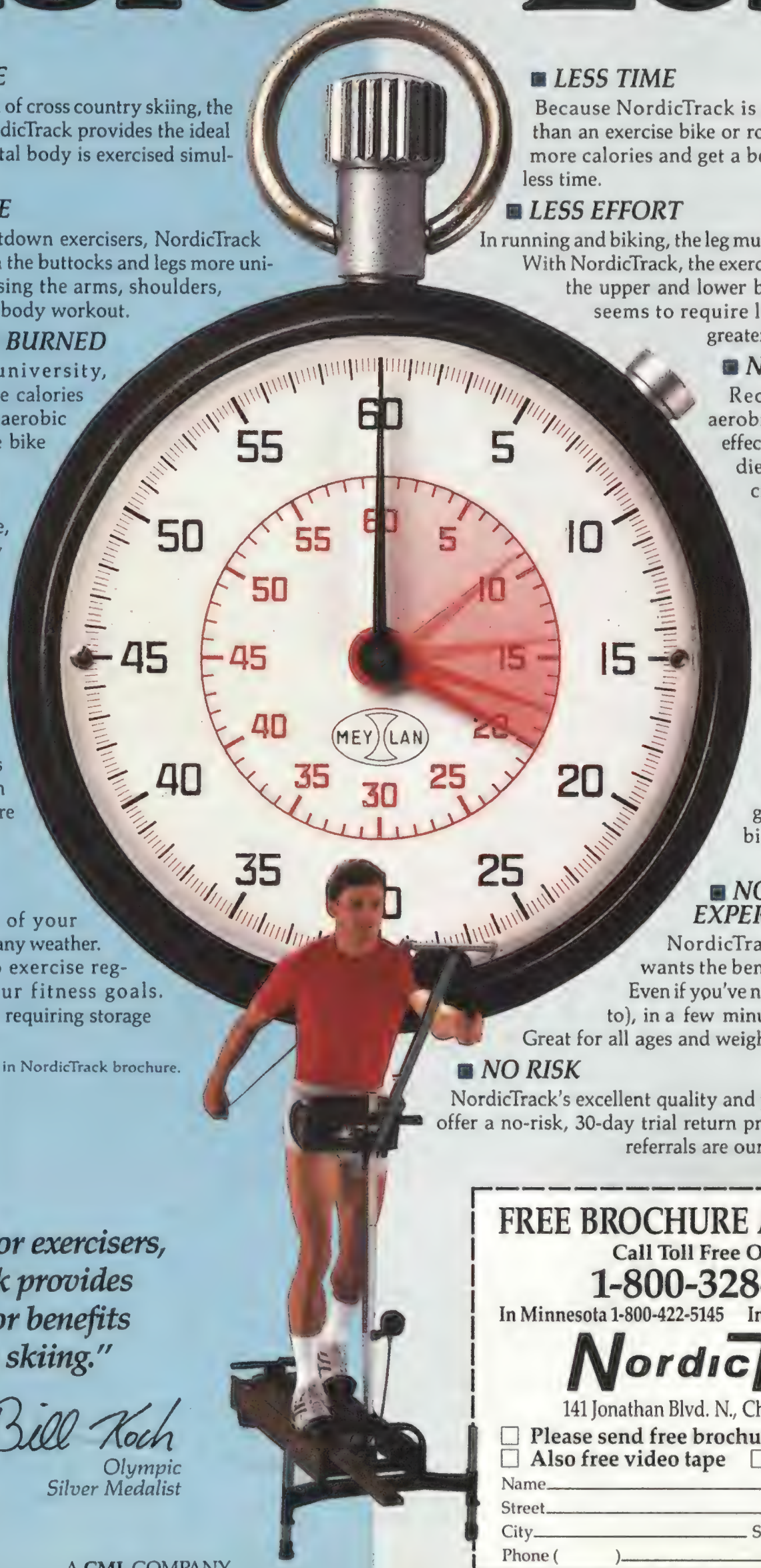

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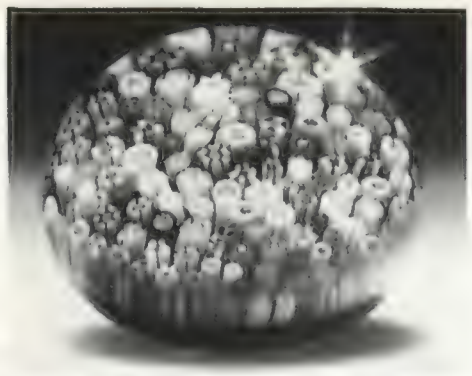

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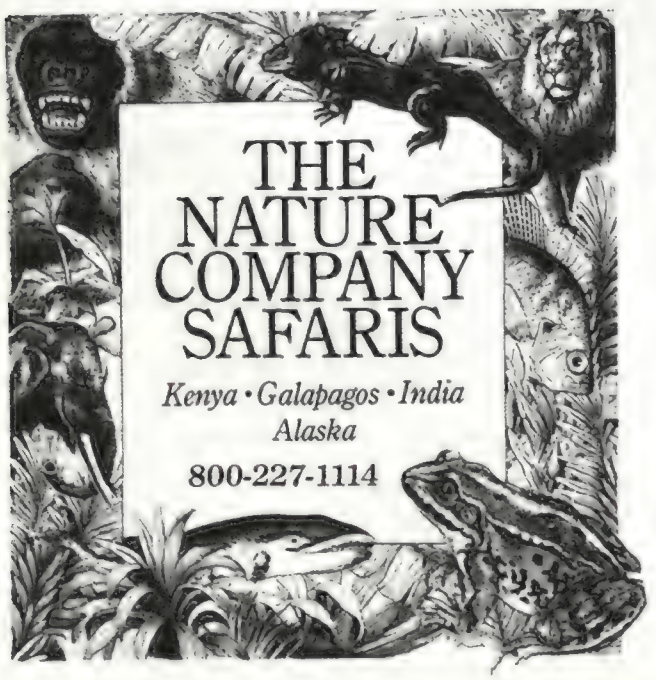

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bright, he was changed." Further, she describes her wedding day as "one of the gloomiest I ever saw." And, not surprisingly, Gloyd disappointed her in bed. She writes that her longing for the physical attention of Gloyd made her ". . . hungry for his caresses." In later years she claimed to have found many other women in much the same state, and even argued that women who strayed into prostitution did so because of the neglect of drunken husbands.

Her views on the matter of sex were surprisingly liberal. She was an advocate of sex education—not only for newlyweds, but for children as well. Tales of babies being found in hollow trees or being brought by storks were anathema to Carry: "Talk freely," she advised parents concerning the instruction of children about sex. "Truth will purify everything it comes in contact with. Ignorance is not innocence, but is the promoter of crime." And here—as she often did throughout her life, she quoted the Bible: "'My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.' Hosea 4:6."

Gloyd became more and more of a drunk. He wouldn't come home except to sleep off his binges. He hid from his patients, taking refuge from his wife and most everybody else by repairing to the local Masonic Lodge. Carry would troop down there and try to get any men she found heading inside to drag Gloyd out—but without much luck. She left him when their baby was 6 weeks old and returned to live with her parents. "Pet," said Gloyd in begging for yet another chance, "if you leave me, I will be a dead man in six months." He was more or less accurate in his prediction. But her mother had somehow had the good sense to counsel her not to return to the pleading doctor. Carry raised the child, a girl—mentally and physically debilitated, as fate would have it—with her second husband.

It is for her opposition to alcoholic beverages, of course, that Carry Nation is best known. However, to suggest that she brooded over her early rotten marriage to a drunken husband and took it out on the rest of American manhood is to misjudge her best impulses. Even with Gloyd and their sick child, Carry's attitude was medically modern: "Oh," she exclaimed, "the curse that comes through heredity, and this liquor evil, a disease that entails more depravity on children unborn, than all else, unless it be tobacco." Elsewhere she wrote: "I did not know then that drinking men were drugged men, diseased men."

In Topeka, Carry came armed with her trusty ax and the Good Book.

Her second husband, David Nation, was a lawyer, a journalist, a farmer and a preacher—and not very good at anything. They moved to Columbia, Texas, where Carry took in boarders and fed the drifters. Later, in Richmond, Texas, she ran a hotel, cooked and cleaned and nursed, and saw the raw edges of male life on the Western frontier. It made her sick—and angry—deepening her social consciousness. By the time the Nations picked up their belongings and headed for Kansas in 1893, Carry was a "vessel of wrath" and indignation about to explode. In Medicine Lodge where they settled, poor David would try to preach his sermons, but Carry

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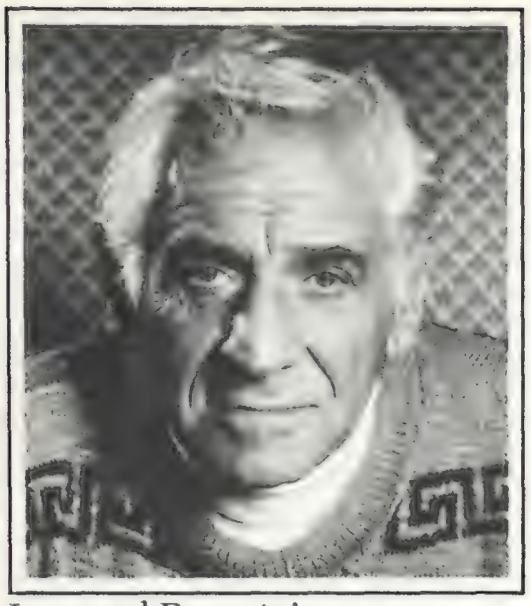
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wouldn't let him. Sitting in the congregation she'd correct and amplify what he had to say. If David objected, Carry would announce the service was over and sometimes, it was reported, marched her husband out the door. Clearly, she had had enough of male superiority and was hovering on the lunatic fringe. But just as clearly, her most important work lay ahead of her.

Officially, Kansas was a dry state. You couldn't buy intoxicants over the counter except for medicinal purposes, like for rabies or typhoid or, say, a case of the blues from drinking too much the night before. The laws were a joke and nobody bothered to enforce them. In Medicine Lodge—as in most of Kansas—there were "joints" that sold liquor. This, after all, was Kansas—then still very much part of the West (Hays, not too far from where Carry lived, had been known as the Sodom of the plains).

What Carry tried to do—first with the assistance of the other women in town and later more or less on her own—was to get the Kansas laws enforced. If you discount the violence of her tongue, her early efforts were peaceful. She took a beating in terms of popular ridicule, and often a physical one as well. Her efforts produced a mixed result and to large parts of the public she was a laughingstock.

On June 6, 1899, Carry Nation awoke to a "musical" voice, one that "seemed to be speaking in [her] heart." It told her to go south 20-odd miles to Kiowa, Kansas—a perpetually sleepy town near the Oklahoma border. To Carry, the voice was God telling her what to do next in her fight against the Kansas joints. In addition to His commandment to go to Kiowa, God added the following assurance: "I'll stand by you." Carry concluded—with more than a little poetic license—that

Piercing look through steel-rimmed spectacles became characteristic, but because she was a fanatic about "plain" dress, she usually wore black.

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Sign on saloon tent misspelled her name, expressed "wet" views.

all together God's remarks could be interpreted to mean: "Take something in your hands, and throw [it] at these places in Kiowa and smash them."

Carry spent the rest of the morning wrapping brickbats in newspapers. That afternoon, with a horse and buggy, she made the trip to Kiowa. On her way she had visions of demons gathered along the road. Later, she asked for another sign from God, a sort of confirmation that she had heard Him right the first time and that Kiowa was the town whose bars were to be righteously smashed. If God wanted her to continue, then her horse was to pass unguided (at least by Carry) through a particular gate on the road. He did, and they both arrived at Kiowa later that night.

The next morning (June 7) Carry went into a saloon operated by one Mr. Dobson. She laid out her balls of rock-bearing paper (she called them "smashers") and delivered to a startled Mr. Dobson a lecture on the evils of drink. When she concluded, she rifled the smashers at the bottles and glasses and mirrors of Mr. Dobson's saloon. The result was liquid carnage —and a slice of history.

But broken glass and running whiskey and a terrified Dobson were not what Carry saw as she trashed her first joint. Instead ". . . I saw Mr. McKinley, the President, sitting in an old fashion arm chair and as the stones would strike I saw them hit the chair

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and the chair fell to pieces, and I saw Mr. McKinley fall over." As ready with interpretation as she was with vision, Carry tells us what it all meant: ". . . smashing in Kansas was intended to strike the head of this nation the hardest blow, for every saloon I smashed in Kansas had a license from the head of this government. . . ." Thus, Carry Nation began her assault on the country at large.

These days Kansas is "wet"—or partially so, at least. Kiowa itself is a peaceful small town with a large rock commemorating Carry's adventures. Near the site of Dobson's saloon is the Uptown Recreation Club (the euphemism perhaps a legacy of Carry's wrath). It is a local bar, full of pool tables and girlie posters, that pushes beer. Patrons of the Uptown drink the local concoction: tomato juice and beer. Red Ones, they are called. In Kiowa, as in the rest of the country, no doubt there are men drinking up their weekly checks instead of paying off the note at the bank. No doubt there are lonely and discouraged wives out on the Kansas farms trying to raise a family with the burden of an alcoholic husband. Carry's battle seems lost—at least in the territory where she first fought for the cause that made her famous. But perhaps not entirely. Although we have usually regarded Carry Nation as little more than an uncommon scold about drinking and smoking, her highly visible rage may have pointed the way for a more mature national debate on these matters.

"I believe I have always failed in everything I undertook to do the first time," Carry wrote, "but I learned only by experience, paid dearly for it and valued it afterwards."

It would be reassuring if we could believe those are the words of a woman who grew wise with age. But it is hard to forget the outrageousness of her later years. Once, on a visit to New York City, Carry threatened random "hatchetation" unless the Hotel Victoria (irony always had a way of cropping up around our heroine) clothed the naked statue of Diana that adorned its lobby. Not wanting to join the Dobson saloons of the world, the Victoria did so—with tantalizing folds of cheesecloth. Flushed with victory, Carry held a press conference at which she sang the following:

Sing a song of six joints,
With bottles full of rye;
Four and twenty beer kegs,
Stacked up on the sly.
When the kegs were opened,
The beer began to sing,
Hurrah for Carry Nation,
Her work beats anything.

Backed by prohibitionists, she conducted a meeting in Rochester, New York. When smashing "joints," she said, she saw a vision of President McKinley, for every saloon has "a license from the head of this government."

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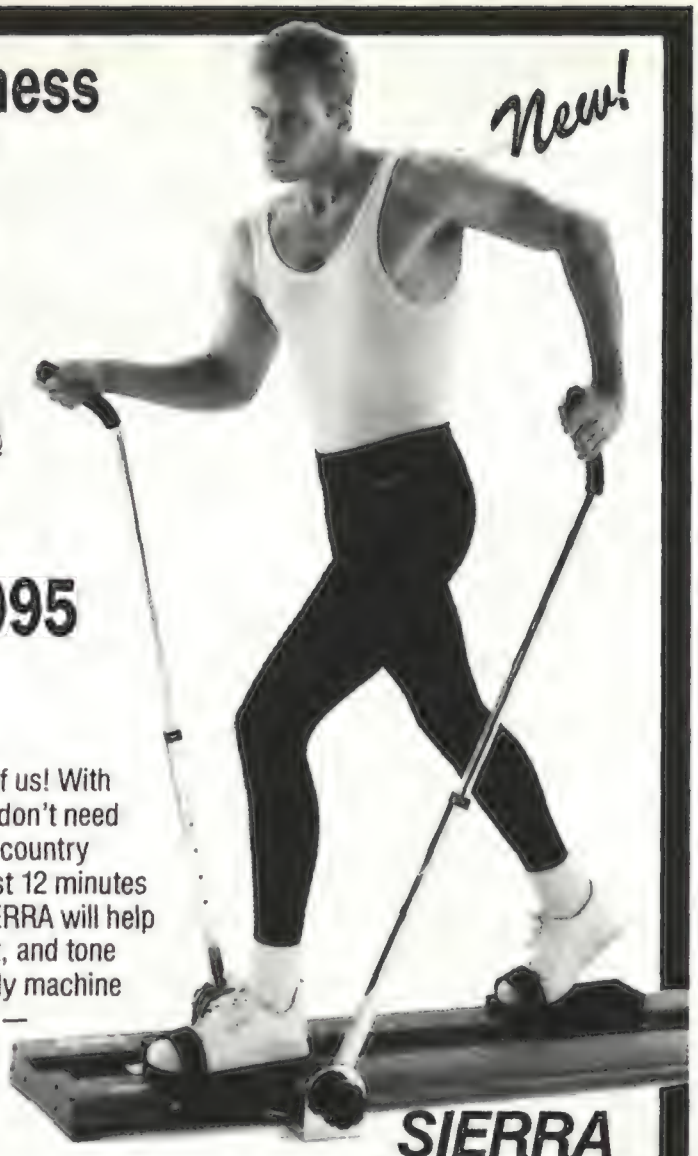

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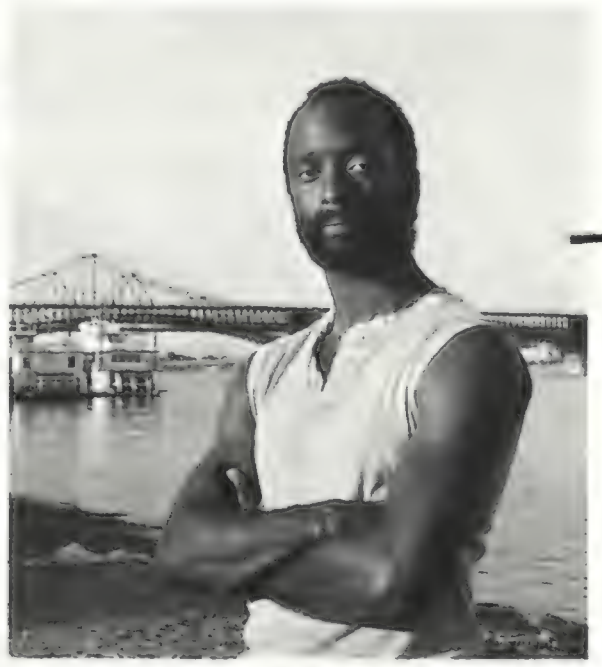
Book reviews

Mississippi Solo
Eddy L. Harris
Nick Lyons Books
(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich), $17.95

This story of a young black man's voyage in a canoe down the length of the Mississippi River is ultimately rewarding, a contemporary true-adventure saga laced with self-deprecating humor, sensitive observation and affecting commentary. However, like the river itself, the story takes some getting used to.

For many pages, the author tries the reader's patience as he grapples not only with problems in guiding his canoe but with problems in getting his doughty odyssey down on paper. Just as he would have profited from even a little advice, to say nothing of some paddling practice, before he launched his frail craft on the mighty Father of Waters one



After Stanford, Eddy Harris traveled widely before challenging Mississippi.

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"Still–in a way–nobody sees a flower–really–
it is so small–we haven't time–
and to see takes time, like to have a friend takes time."
—Georgia O'Keeffe

Red Poppy, 1927 *Oil on canvas 7" × 9", Private collection, Geneva*

Photography by Malcolm Varon

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chilly autumn day, so would he have been helped in telling the tale of his adventure by more perceptive and sympathetic editing.

Eddy L. Harris makes up in exuberance and good humor for what he lacks in technique. Being innocent, ill prepared, even foolhardy, is part of the fun. It enhances the challenge.

"I've never minded looking stupid and I have no fear of failure," he writes at the outset. "I decided to canoe down the Mississippi River and to find out what I was made of."

Just like that. Had he trained for his adventure, studied canoe and camp lore, acquainted himself with the flora and fauna he was likely to encounter, the trip wouldn't have been half so daunting, half so surprising. And had his editors been more attentive to getting his sentences right, his story might have lost some of its dash. A buoyant amateurism seems to inform all aspects of this endeavor.

The moment the river starts to pull his canoe down the narrow outlet of Lake Itasca in north central Minnesota, feelings of excitement and joy, then feelings of fear and frustration, crowd each other, rushing over our traveler.

Given to sudden mood shifts, at one moment he finds himself singing, talking to birds, finding God in the river and generally exulting in the wonder of the reckless enterprise he has undertaken. At another he rages at a blustery headwind that has stopped him cold, only a few miles into his journey: "*God Almighty! Give me a break!*"

As noted, *Mississippi Solo* is not a graceful book but it's an engaging one. There is much information in it about the river itself, what it's become in the years since Mark Twain plied it as a

*See this powertrain limited warranty & its restrictions at dealer.

riverboat pilot (see page 170). From the stern of a humble canoe, the sight of monstrous dams, locks, towboats and barges guided by radar is awesome. The towns along its banks are evoked with a nice eloquence and the many people the author encounters—boat people, fishermen, hunters, shopkeepers, waitresses, bartenders and just idlers—come vividly alive. Almost without exception, they are friendly and helpful, curious about a black man headed for New Orleans in a canoe.

One of the most appealing aspects of this book is how Harris comes to terms with his blackness. Warned by a friend that he would be traveling from "where there ain't no black folks to where they still don't like us much," he is understandably concerned and there is a good deal of introspection en route about his vulnerable situation. Sure enough, he is set upon by drunken rednecks somewhere in Mississippi. It's a harrowing experience, but, perhaps remarkably, the only overt hostility he encounters. He is not unrealistic about race relations in America, but appreciative of the humanity he seems to find in nearly everyone he meets.

"There is no color that separates us, no race, no issue deeper than humanity to bind us. And so . . . when a man in Natchez said to me after I told him the wonders of the journey, 'What a marvelous thing! And I bet you not everybody who helped you out was black either, was they?' I smiled and answered, 'Nope. In fact none of them was.' Neither black nor white nor any color. He didn't know what I was talking about, and I felt no need to explain."

James Idema
Writer and critic

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Mark Twain's Letters,
Vol. 1, *1853-1866*
Edited by Edgar Marquess Branch,
Michael B. Frank and
Kenneth M. Sanderson
University of California Press, $35

"I have now been here over two months . . . but I know, and you know, that I cannot double that time in any one place without a miracle. I have been here as long, now, as it is in my nature to stay in one place—and from this out I shall feel as much like a prisoner as if I were in the county jail." When Samuel Clemens wrote this complaint to his brother Orion in 1862, he was working their claims in the Esmeralda district near the disputed California-Nevada border. His letters during this period vacillate between the expectation of riches and the suspicion that it's "all talk and no cider" in this "d—dest country for disappointments the world ever saw." This letter is unusual because he went beyond an immediate reaction to his situation and described himself in a way that defines the first volume of the Mark Twain letters. The Clemens-Twain of this initial collection is constantly on the move, planning a journey or being sorry he had not taken one, changing location, job, name, even (as the illustrations indicate) the amount and disposition of his facial hair.

The first Sam Clemens we meet is the 17-year-old itinerant printer, sending letters home from New York and Philadelphia. When he speaks in his own voice, he is casually racist, anti-Semitic, xenophobic, with the country boy's superiority to the "trundle-bed trash—children, I mean. . . this mass of human vermin" that impedes his passage on the streets of New York. Since the letter to his mother from which these quotations come exists only as it appeared in the Hannibal *Journal,* which Orion was then editing, remarks that might offend our contemporary ear must have seemed ordinary enough to his 19th-century audience.

As the editors suggest, he was a product of the small Southern town from which he had just begun his escape. Although Twain at 30 could not forbear a Jewish joke with which he teased his Bible-reading niece, and although his fondness for his Hawaiian friends did not keep him from calling them the "Cannibals (I mean ladies & gentlemen of Sandwich Island nativity)," the celebrated Western humorist embarking for the East and literary fame at the end of 1866 had come a long way from Hannibal and the attitudes expressed at 17. What young Sam shares with the later Twain is an attraction to comic exaggeration, which softens any offense (even if it is intended), and an unfortunate propensity for padding his letters with boring, borrowed travel material.

The boy printer gave way to the young riverman. From 1857, when Clemens began to learn to navigate the river, until 1861, when he made his last trip as a pilot, his letters—only a few of which exist—come from points along the St. Louis-New Orleans run. Much of the material here was reworked for *Life on the Mississippi,* but it has more immediacy, if less art, in the letters. This is particularly true of his letter about the death of his brother Henry, the victim of an explosion on the boat where he clerked. It moves from grief to guilt ("Mollie you do not understand why I

was not on that boat") to the consolation of knowing that the dying Henry was treated tenderly by the people of Memphis, "the noblest city on the face of the earth." That it was written to his sister-in-law, rather than to his mother, his sister or Orion, suggests his difficulty in facing Henry's death and its effect on the family. In 1866, writing to an old friend from his river days, he recalled what was best about his work on the Mississippi. "*All* men—kings & serfs alike—are *slaves* to ~~eir~~ other men & to circumstances—save, alone, the pilot—who comes at no man's beck or call, obeys no man's orders & scorns all men's suggestions. . . asking no homage of any one, seeking no popularity, no notoriety & not caring a damn whether school keeps or not." There is no such independence in his growing reputation and the demands it makes on him, but he tells Bowen ("Bill, My Boy") that, although he longs for the pilot's life, he is too old (at 30), too lazy, "too fond of running all night & sleeping all day—too fond of sloshing around, talking with people."

It was probably the Clemens restlessness that drove him West in 1861, but there were practical and fanciful reasons for the move. The Union blockade at Memphis had pretty much halted commercial traffic on the river, and he had no desire to be dragooned into piloting supply boats for the Union Army.

The fanciful reason was his certainty that he would strike it rich, which some men—but no Clemenses—did. He went West with Orion, who had been appointed Secretary of the Nevada Territory, and there, over the next five years, he became an unsuccessful but recurrently hopeful miner, a reporter in Virginia City, a writer in San Francisco. The greater part of the book covers this period. Many of the mining letters are too narrowly concerned with particular claims, and there is never enough sense of the hardship and brutality of the mining camps. Yet there is a great deal of descriptive and comic material, much of it used later in *Roughing It,* which not only keeps the letters lively but gives a good sense of towns like Carson City and Virginia City, teetering between rawness and propriety.

In a slightly curious letter to Orion in 1865, he urges his "honest, pious, virtuous" brother to "**Go forth & preach.**" For Twain, preaching was an unfulfilled ambition since he lacked the "necessary stock in trade—*i.e.* religion. . . . But I *have* had a 'call' to literature, of a low order—*i.e.* humorous." He answered that "call" as Mark Twain, a name he probably first used in 1863.

By 1866, the Western humorist had begun to build an Eastern reputation, primarily through the story we know as "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" ("a villainous backwoods sketch"). In a postscript to the letter quoted above, Twain says, "You had better shove this in the stove. . . I don't want any absurd 'literary remains' & 'unpublished letters of Mark Twain' published after I am planted." The letter never found its way to the stove and enough others survived to give a firm but fragmented picture of Sam Clemens on the move, making his way to Mark Twain and toward a permanent place in American literature.

The University of California Press' Mark Twain Project puts a heavy emphasis on textual scholarship. For that

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By 1863, Clemens had been a printer, river pilot and unsuccessful miner.

reason, there are more than 100 pages of "Editorial Apparatus" that will be minimally useful to most readers. For someone simply interested in Twain, the letters and the substantive notes would be enough. This is an admirable book for Twain addicts, scholars or not.

Gerald Weales
Emeritus Professor of English
University of Pennsylvania

For All Mankind
Harry Hurt III, interviews by Al Reinert
Atlantic Monthly Press, $22.95

It has been 16 years since Man last walked on the moon, long enough for moonflight to recede from modernity and dwindle into history. Many Americans are too young to remember it and too young to understand readily the heightened but mixed emotions that accompanied Man's first steps on another celestial body.

In *For All Mankind*, a workmanlike account of the Apollo space program, Harry Hurt III recalls for those who missed it, or have forgotten, the project's glamour, thrill and challenge. There were six landings and three lunar-orbit flights. Twelve men left footprints in the fine, easily compressed lunar soil; one, Alan Shepard, hit two golf balls there.

Hurt, a correspondent for *Newsweek*, builds his book around a typical mission, filling in details and drama from

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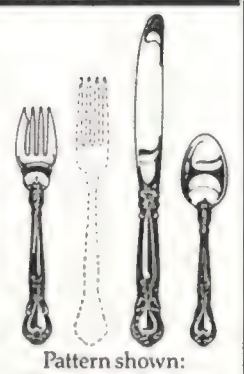

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specific flights. Like journalists of that bygone era, Hurt tries to impress us with figures—*x* thousand pounds of liquid oxygen consumed, *y* hundred switches to be checked—but he is most successful when he emphasizes the human aspects of life in space, reminding us how cramped and foul the living conditions were aboard the command module, and stressing the dangers and risks of each mission.

Just as no science fiction writer could have predicted that Man's first steps on the moon would be televised live around the world, none could have predicted that one of the spacemen, Apollo 11's Buzz Aldrin, would take with him a white wafer, a tiny gold chalice and a thimbleful of wine in order to celebrate holy communion there. A chapter on the astronauts' postlunar destinies finds that some of these supremely rationalist, hard-line Establishment men became more devout Christians or adherents of sundry New Age philosophies. On the other hand, some of them are now selling real estate.

The author employs several lines of reasoning to argue that Apollo was a "$40 Billion Bargain." While he exaggerates the value of the program's technological spin-offs, Hurt plausibly claims that seeing Earth from the moon has made us aware of our planet's fragility and oneness. Spaceflight (if not the moon landings specifically) has given Man a priceless perspective on himself, one that might yet save him from the follies of environmental destruction and war.

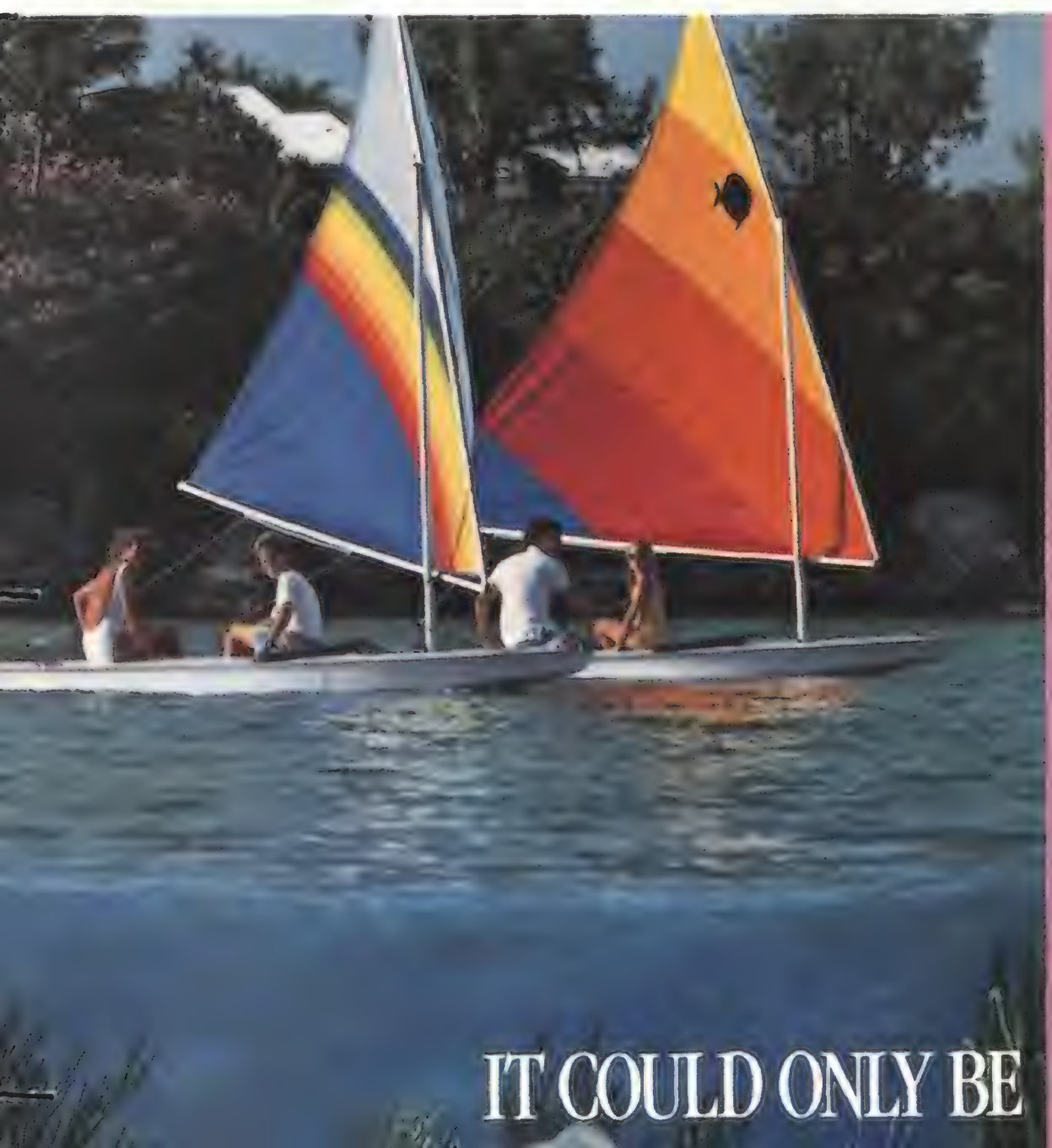
Hurt is bitterly disappointed that "even the most patriotic members of America's 'silent majority' " questioned the great sums of money being thrown at the moon while so many fellow citizens lived in poverty. Now, in an age of $150 billion deficits, these arguments and Hurt's rejoinders ring sadly in our ears, a reminder that our current confusion about our national purpose is longstanding.

Even after 16 years, perspective eludes us. President Nixon called the week of Apollo 11's flight the "greatest week in the history of the world since the Creation," but perhaps future generations, less pompous than we, won't look back at it with the awe that is expected of them. With some amusement and generosity, they might see the moon shot as a stunt—a glorious stunt that involved vast numbers of Americans and captured the world's imagination, a stunt that was just about worth the cost.

For All Mankind, while often entertaining, is marred by factual errors and pseudoscientific rhetoric. In one instance, the dangers of spaceflight are said to include "the great unknown of infinity itself. . . . one did not have to be a lunatic to believe with reasonable certainty that just about anything could happen in an infinite universe—modern science said so by definition." Modern science, of course, says just the opposite: that we live in a universe of physical laws and only tangible dangers.

The Apollo program deserves chroniclers who are well versed in science yet skeptical of its culture, appreciative of the technology but sensitive to the social context. So far, the definitive account remains Norman Mailer's *Of a Fire on the Moon* (1971), the literary effort most worthy of the adventure.

Ken Kalfus
Science writer



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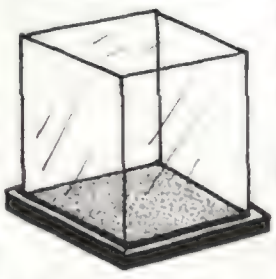

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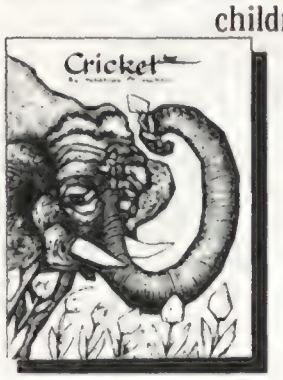

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Washington Craft Show

The seventh annual Washington Craft Show, sponsored by the Women's Committee of the Smithsonian Associates, will be held April 20-23, in the Departmental Auditorium, 1301 Constitution Avenue N.W., across the street from the National Museum of American History. One hundred artists will exhibit and sell work in a variety of media. There will be an admission charge.

In conjunction with the Craft Show, the James Renwick Alliance will offer a special crafts weekend, with tours and lectures, on April 22 and 23. For details, call (301) 229-0928.

Special April exhibits and events

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery
Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century (April 16-July 6) See *Highlights continued*, page 180.
A Jeweler's Eye: Arts of the Islamic Book from the Vever Collection (through April 23) Paintings and manuscripts from the Parisian jeweler's trove.
Japanese Art: Recent Acquisitions (through September) A ceremonial palanquin and screens.

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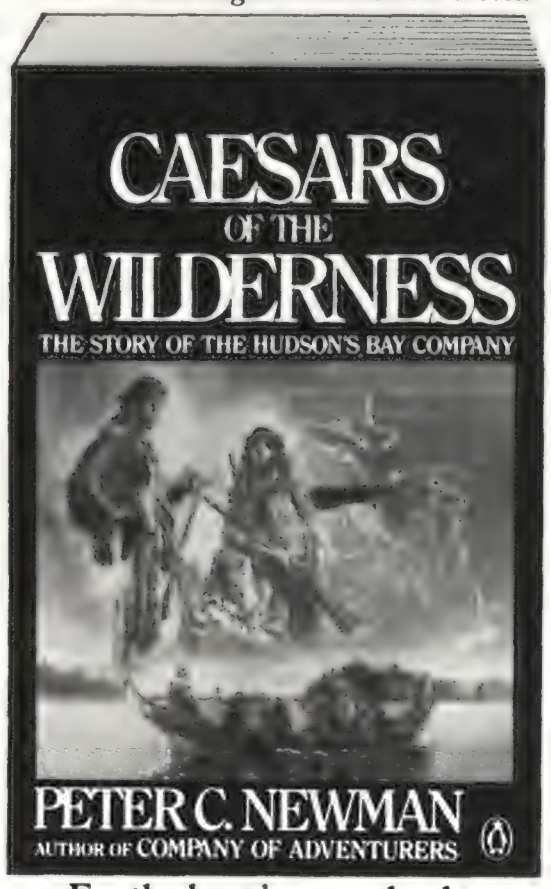

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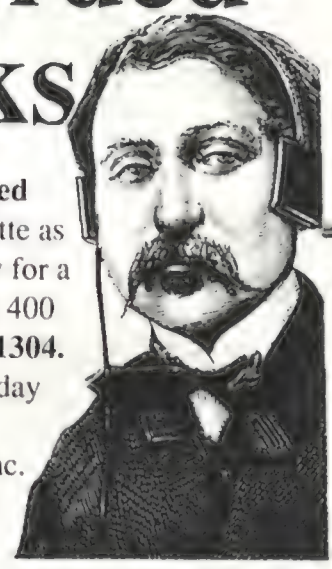

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The First Federal Congress (through July 23) A 200th birthday commemoration featuring portraits, memorabilia and contemporary prints and cartoons.

National Museum of Natural History
A Celebration of Flowers: Two Centuries of Curtis Botanical Magazine (through April 30) Botanic prints.
Flora of South Africa (through April 30) Botanical plates by watercolorist Elise Bodley, in the Naturalist Center.

National Museum of African Art
Gold of Africa: Jewelry and Ornaments from Ghana, Côte D'Ivoire, Mali and Senegal (April 5-August 28) A celebration of the goldsmith's art of West Africa.
Sounding Forms: African Musical Instruments (April 26-June 18) First international exhibition presenting these instruments as sculpture.

National Museum of American Art
Photography of Invention: American Pictures of the '80s (April 28-August 13) Images by 88 experimental practitioners of the art.
The Art of Paul Manship (through July 23) Sculptures, medals and works on paper by an eclectic American master.

Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden
Thomas Eakins Photographs (through June 26) Motion studies, portraits, Arcadian scenes in honor of the 150th anniversary of photography.
Recent Acquisitions, 1986-1989 (through May 14) A selection of works by a wide range of contemporary artists.
Directions: Mel Chin (through April 23) Sculptures, mixed-media installation.

National Museum of American History
The Ceremonial Court (opens April 5) Permanent installation re-creates White House spaces from 1902 to the present.
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American Television from the Fair to the Family, 1939-1989 (April 19-April 1990) Artifacts tracing the rise of television in American culture.
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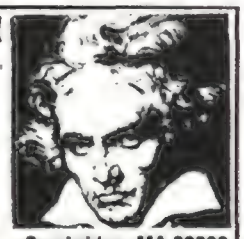

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The Way to Independence: Memories of a Hidatsa Indian Family, 1840-1920 (April 12-October) A chronicle of the American Indian experience spanning 80 years.
American Women of the Etching Revival (through May 31) Centennial exhibition featuring more than 70 works.

National Air and Space Museum
Hubble Space Telescope A full-scale test model of the telescope that will be launched aboard a space shuttle.
Focus on Flight (through April) Forty photographs from the NASM contest.

Cooper-Hewitt Museum (New York)
L'Art de Vivre: Decorative Arts and Design in France, 1789-1989 (through July 16) More than 400 objects created by French artisans, displayed in celebration of the bicentennial of the French Revolution.

Renwick Gallery
The Boat Show: Fantastic Vessels, Fictional Voyages (April 7-August 6) Renditions of fanciful ships by 15 contemporary American artists.
Bound to Vary: Billy Budd, Sailor (April 7-August 6) Unique hand-made bindings for a limited edition of Melville's classic in a show organized by the Guild of Book Workers.

Exhibition catalogs

Catalogs available currently include:
Flowers from the Royal Gardens of Kew (paper, $15.95)
The Art of Paul Manship (paper, $24.95; cloth, $50)
The First Federal Congress, 1789-1791 (paper, $24.95)

To order, send check or money order to Museum Shops, Box 44083, Washington, D.C. 20026-0083. Include 15 percent of total purchase to cover postage and handling (minimum, $1.75).

Smithsonian on the air

Radio Smithsonian: Features include stories on notable black American women, the egg as a symbol of spring and a celebration honoring Duke Ellington's 90th birthday.
Here at the Smithsonian: Three-minute presentations take you behind the scenes. To find out what stations in your area carry these programs, write: Office of Telecommunications, MAH Room BB40, Washington, D.C. 20560.

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Lecture and Seminar Program

The program hosts events in Palo Alto, California; South Bend, Indiana; and Davenport, Iowa, during April.

For information on offerings around the country, write to the Lecture and Seminar Program, 1100 Jefferson Drive S.W., Room 3045, Washington, D.C. 20560, or call (202) 357-1350.

Resident Associate Program

To become a Resident Associate, or for fee and ticket information, call 357-3030.

Glasnost Film Festival: New Soviet Documentaries (April 3, 10, 24; May 1; 7:30 P.M.) Provocative films made during the past two years.

Forty Acres and a Mule? Black Americans and the Quest for Land Ownership (April 22; 11 A.M.-4:30 P.M.) Seminar on historical issues and current challenges in black community development.

More Like Us: An Evening with James Fallows (April 6; 8 P.M.) The journalist discusses his new book on Asia's economic challenge to the United States.

Klezmer Conservatory Band (April 23; 2 and 5 P.M.) Two performances by America's foremost klezmer ensemble.

Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service

SITES organizes and circulates exhibitions to cities throughout the United States and abroad. To sponsor a show in your community, write SITES, Smithsonian, Washington, D.C. 20560. Here are some April exhibits:

Chattanooga, Tennessee (April 1-30) *Vietnam Veterans Memorial: A National Experience,* Chattanooga Regional History Museum.

Cleveland, Ohio (April 1-June 18) *Field to Factory: Afro-American Migration, 1915-1940,* African American Museum of Cleveland.

Gainesville, Florida (April 2-May 7) *Italy: One Hundred Years of Photography,* Santa Fe Community College Art Gallery.

Midland, Michigan (April 1-May 14) *Savory Suppers and Fashionable Feasts: Dining in Victorian America,* Midland County Historical Society.

Warwick, Rhode Island (April 1-30) *What Style Is It?,* Warwick Museum.

Wichita Falls, Texas (April 1-June 18) *Steichen and His Men: A Photographic Portrait of World War II,* Wichita Falls Museum and Art Center.

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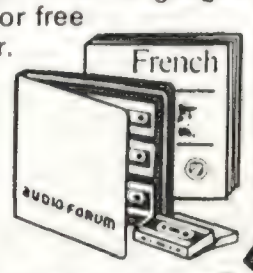

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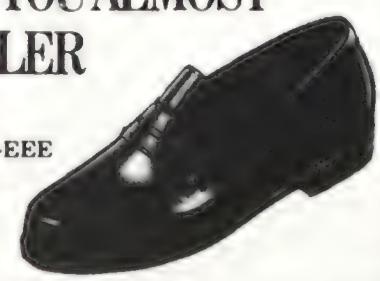

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Highlights continued

A conqueror's enchanting legacy

When the fearsome warlord Timur, often known as Tamerlane, swept out from the Central Asian steppes in the late 1300s, he satisfied an appetite for conquest by subduing lands from Iran to India. Slaughter and pillage won him a reputation as one who "went forth wicked with insolent swords."

Yet for all his bloodthirsty exploits, Timur yearned after accomplishments of another order. The refinements of Persian culture captivated this son of a nomadic people. As he vanquished the fabled centers of eastern Islam—Tabriz, Isfahan and Shiraz—Timur accessioned artists and poets with the single-mindedness he brought to battle.

In Iran and Syria, Anatolia and India he sought out practitioners of every art. From Damascus alone, Timur seized "learned men, weavers, tailors, gem-cutters, carpenters, farriers, painters, bow-makers, falconers, in short, craftsmen of every kind." Cadres of artisans were dispatched by force to Samarkand, the city he would transform as the capital of his empire.

This passion for high culture became the source of a great tradition. "Timur and the Princely Vision," organized by the Smithsonian's Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, opens April 16 at the Sackler and August 16 at LACMA to explore the legacy of Timur's court.

His successors, the princes of Timur's ruling house, in turn assumed their roles as exalted patrons. From royal workshops throughout the realm, artists and craftsmen produced paintings and ceramics, metalwork, textiles and illuminated manuscripts that are among the treasures of Persian culture.

These master artisans created an imagined world of never-ending courtly pleasures. In the images and objects they shaped, we behold the Timurid princes untouched by time, feasting amid lush gardens, inhabiting the rarefied domain of an Earthly paradise.
Kathleen M. Burke

War mask, worked in steel, exemplifies the elegant armor of a Timurid foe.

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Initial illustration for one edition of the *Jami al-Usul*, a work on religious tradition, bespeaks a gilder's skill.

Poem relating Persian prince's wooing of Chinese princess inspired painting.

Manuscript illustration retells story of Joseph fleeing Potiphar's wife.

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NEW **Brooklyn with a Bang** *May 25-28 or September 14-17*: Architecture, art.

Sanibel-Captiva *May 28-June 3*: Flora and fauna on Florida's Gulf Coast.

Alaska Landscapes *June 20-July 2 or July 25-August 6*: Denali National Park and more.

Family Sampler *June 30-July 2*: Affordable weekend of Smithsonian fun for all ages.

Grand Canyon *June 30-July 9*: Raft down the magnificent Colorado.

Pueblo Indians *July 8-16*: Based in Santa Fe; Southwestern arts and culture.

California—Big Sur to Yosemite *July 13-22 or September 13-22*: Easy scenic hiking.

Salmon River *July 18-26*: A raft trip that combines camping and a lodge visit.

Sojourn in Santa Fe *July 23-30*: Study historic and contemporary Hispanic culture.

Waterton-Glacier *July 24-August 4*: Hike the backcountry of Montana and Canada.

Lewis & Clark *July 29-August 5*: Horseback camping on Idaho portion of 1805 trail.

Colorado Rockies *August 5-11*: Enjoy outdoor program at the Nature Place.

Aviation Weekend *August 8-13*: Abbotsford Airshow, Boeing, Seattle flight museum.

Railroading the Rockies *August 11-19*: By private car and narrow-gauge steam train.

Alaska Cruise *August 12-22*: Explore the Inside Passage aboard an expedition ship.

Pacific Northwest *August 15-26*: Seattle, Vancouver, Victoria, San Juan Islands.

Black Hills & Crow Fair *August 16-25*: Includes Yellowstone and the Tetons.

NEW **Romance of the Gold Rush** *September 2-9*: From Sacramento to San Francisco, sail aboard the tall ship *California*.

NEW **Detroit Auto Barons** *September 14-17*: Visit estates of Ford, Fisher and Dodge.

NEW **Columbia River Cruise** *September 21-30*: Sail from Victoria through Puget Sound to Portland and up Columbia to Snake River.

Foreign Study Tours

People's Republic of China Ten tours in 1989 for new and repeat travelers.

European Countryside Programs *May-September*: Relaxing sojourns in Hungary, England, Austria, France, Italy, Switzerland, West Germany or Wales.

NEW **Botswana-Zimbabwe** *May 9-26*: Includes Victoria Falls and Okavango Delta.

USSR-Golden Ring *May 20-June 3 or September 9-23*: Study ancient Russian culture.

Danube Voyage *May 23-June 9*: Art and history from Romania to West Germany.

Central Asia *May 26-June 9 or September 15-29*: From Leningrad, fly to Samarkand and Bukhara. Ends in Moscow.

Florence Seminar *May 27-June 11*: Classes and excursions based in a villa-hotel.

Greece *May 28-June 12*: History and art from Thessaloníki to Athens.

Odyssey of Flight *June 2-13*: Paris Air Show and 45th anniversary of D-Day.

Highlands of Scotland *June 2-18*: Culture and natural history. Reside at charming Aigas Field Centre.

NEW **Turkey's Eastern Reaches** *June 7-24*: East from Ankara to the ancient Orient.

NEW **Cotswold Walks** *June 8-20*: A variety of walks through the English countryside.

Poland *June 9-25*: History and culture in Warsaw, Kraków and other cities.

NEW **Gardens of Brittany and Normandy** *June 10-23*: Includes private gardens. Tour ends in Paris.

British Isles Voyage *June 16-July 3*: Remote hamlets and islands aboard the *Argonaut*.

Cave Art in France and Spain *June 19-July 4*: Cantabrian coast, the Pyrenees, Dordogne.

Swiss Countryside Walks *June 21-July 6*: Moderate or challenging day hikes.

Walks in England's Lake District *June 29-July 12*: Natural and cultural history.

Scotland by Train *July 6-19*: Skye, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Inverness, the Highlands.

NEW **England for Families** *July 10-20*: Storybook London and the Cotswolds for families with children, grandchildren (ages 7-14).

Iceland *July 22-August 6*: Circle the island, study natural history, geology.

Baltic Passage *July 28-August 15*: Cruise to Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Leningrad.

NEW **Lena River-USSR** *July 28-August 16*: Exclusive cruise through Siberia.

NEW **Voyage to Sumatra and Java** *August 1-17*: Visit Singapore, Jakarta, Borobudur.

Trinity Seminar *August 11-26*: Study rare books, ancient manuscripts in Dublin.

Voyage to Greenland and Hudson Bay *August 19-September 4*: Natural history, Inuit culture.

Mongolia *August 20-September 18*: Explore the exotic land of Genghis Khan, including Ulaanbaatar and the Gobi Desert. Begins in Moscow, ends in Beijing.

Smithsonian Seminars

Join fellow Associates who share your special interests at the Smithsonian and around the country. Take part in seminars with Smithsonian curators and guest experts.

Washington, D.C. *April 19-21*
Enjoy Persian and Islamic art, and see the Sackler Gallery's special exhibition "Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century." Or, study American coins and currency with curators from the Smithsonian's National Numismatic Collection.

Oshkosh, Wisconsin *September 21-24*
Learn techniques of aircraft restoration during lectures and hands-on workshops led by specialists from the National Air and Space Museum's Paul E. Garber Facility and the EAA Air Adventure Museum in Oshkosh.

Write to Smithsonian National Associate Program, Washington, DC 20560 or call (202) 357-4700 for tour brochures, (202) 357-1350

Santa Fe, New Mexico *October 10-15*
Study Hispanic, Indian and Anglo art, or trace the history of archaeology in the Southwest, during sessions taught by Smithsonian faculty and local scholars.

Research Expeditions

Contribute your time, talent and financial resources to Smithsonian research. Work with curators at Washington, D.C. museums and archives, or at field sites around the country and the world.

Documenting Our Veterans Memorials
Washington, D.C. *May 24-June 7*
Join with Smithsonian photographers to record Memorial Day ceremonies at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and other military monuments. Contribute your work to the Smithsonian's photographic archives and the Division of Armed Forces History.

Competition in the Forest
Front Royal, Virginia *May 27-June 10*
Track, observe and record the behavior of mammal and bird populations at the Smithsonian's Conservation and Research Center in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. Your collected data will add to an extended monitoring program of all flora and fauna in the area.

American Sculpture Inventory
Washington, D.C. *June 4-16*
Help establish the first nationwide survey of American sculpture as you research traditional carved stone and cast metalworks as well as contemporary sculptures and assemblages in the capital area.

British Enterprises in the New World
London *June 18-30*
Conduct research in London's libraries and museums on the British colonization of the Caribbean. Your findings will contribute to a new Smithsonian exhibition.

Creating Aerospace Curricula
Washington, D.C. *July 9-21*
Using galleries at the Air and Space Museum for inspiration, teachers (K-12) help education staff develop innovative pre- and post-visit aerospace activities for the hundreds of school groups who visit the museum annually.

Air and Space Archival Treasures
Washington, D.C. *July 23-August 4*
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By Donald Dale Jackson

'He welted the sphere a prodigious biff'

"It was in the first inning that Coyote Camp was presented first base on balls. Wabbly Wilmot wagged his biffstick up against the ball for one sacrifice. Dahlen cruised to first on extinct curves. Auld Syne Lange bumped into the ball for another sacrifice. Never More Decker, eager to shatter anything he could, came up.

"There was a reverberating roar and the ball whistled away through the air. Heliogabulus McGraw also whistled through the air in an opposite direction. McGraw and the ball met and stuck together like two lone girls when a tramp is trying to break in through the back door. . . ."

Ah, baseball season. Ah, extinct curves and reverberating roars, Auld Syne Lange and Never More Decker. What I like best about baseball is the music. Not the national anthem or the between-innings organ, but the whacked-out nicknames and blowsy sports doggerel, the history and sheer down-home funky pastoral Americanness of it. The literature quoted above is from a newspaper account of an 1893 game. A batter didn't merely get a hit in that game, he "welted the sphere a prodigious biff." A strikeout victim "struck three times at the ball like a cross-eyed man trying to kill a snake with a hairswitch."

Baseball writers in those years were forever erupting into fits of verse. "The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day" begins an ode that's now an inextinguishable part of our culture. Remember "Tinker to Evers to Chance"? "Ruthlessly pricking our gonfalon bubble, / Making a Giant hit into a double, / Words that are weighty with nothing but trouble: / Tinker to Evers to Chance. . . ."

Best of all were, and are, the nicknames. No sport, no pursuit of any kind has better nicknames than baseball. If you doubt me consult *The Baseball Encyclopedia*. It's true that most Rhodes are Dusty and many Durhams are Bull, but there are quirky treasures galore in its pages. I've collected a few, here thoughtfully arranged in categories, and all true.

Zoological: Hank (Bow Wow) Arft, Jimmy (the Human Mosquito) Slagle, William (Chicken) Wolf, Frank (Dodo) Bird, Jim (Catfish) Hunter.

Gastronomical: William (Pickles) Dillhoefer, Jack (Sour Mash) Daniels, Abraham (Sweetbreads) Bailey, George (Pea Soup) Dumont.

Comments on the player's competence: Sheldon (Available) Jones, John Francis (Phenomenal) Smith, Pearce (What's the Use) Chiles, Hugh (Losing Pitcher) Mulcahy.

Comments on habits or afflictions: Dick (Dirt) Tidrow, Fidgety Phil Collins, Jittery Joe Berry, Wheezer Dell, Tacky Tom Parrott, Will (Whoop-La) White, Tim (Good Eye) Shinnick.

Names internally logical: Buck (Leaky) Fausett, Johnny (Hippety) Hopp, Rags Faircloth, Johnny (Whiz) Gee, Roy (Stormy) Weatherly, Ivy (Poison) Andrews.

For sound alone: Bill (Goober) Zuber, Gene (Suds) Fodge, Emil (Hill Billy) Bildilli, Still Bill Hill.

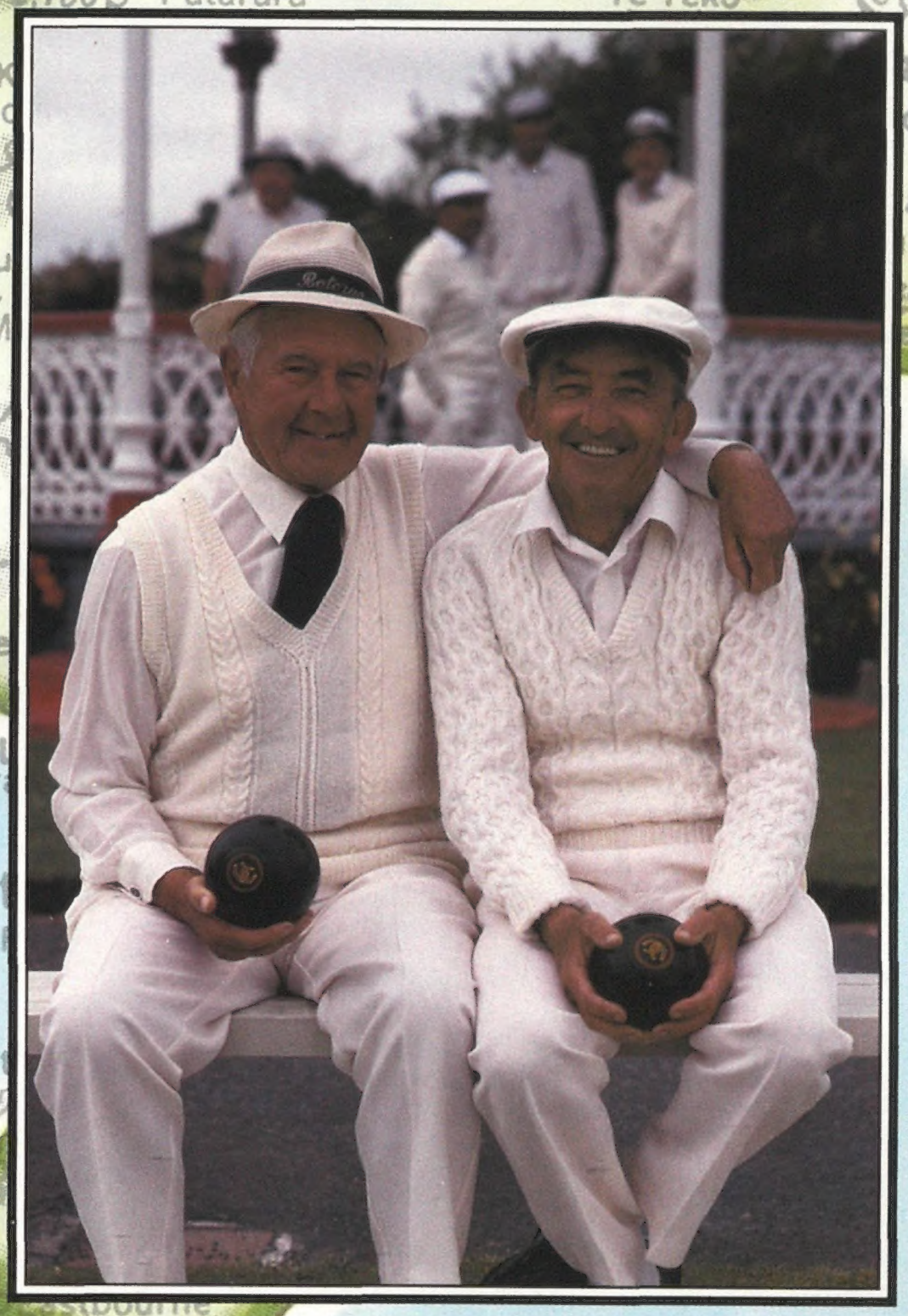
Names invented by sportswriters with at least 1½ years of college: Frank (the Capital Punisher) Howard, Babe (the Sultan of Swat) Ruth, Red (the Nashville Narcissus) Lucas, Pepper (the Wild Hoss of the Osage) Martin, Kent (Buy a Vowel) Hrbek. And the winner: Bob (Death to Flying Things) Ferguson.

Wait—something's happening to me—it's, yes, a doggerel seizure: Forget the Dustys and Rustys and Bucks, / Hark now to Virgil (Fire) Trucks. That should do it. No—another one: There's Doc and there's Lefty, there's Pie and there's Peach, / And there in the corner sits Peek-A-Boo Veach. That is *all*. Sorry. Won't happen again.

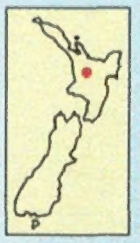
You know how baseball players are always chattering in the infield? Listen to the nicknames sometime. My son and I were watching a softball game once when we both realized that the chatter was stranger than usual. All the infielders were saying something that sounded like "Waygope Inhead" over and over. The pitcher was lobbing great lollipops over the plate with an air of perfect calm. *Bloo-oop* went the pitch. *Swish* went the bat. "Waygope Inhead" went the infield. We moved closer to hear better. It was "Way to go, Pinhead." Pinhead was pitching.

Why do yesterday's nicknames seem so much better than today's? Oh, there are a few around—there's Mark (Amazing) Grace of the Cubs and Dennis (Oil Can) Boyd of the Red Sox and my favorite of the recent entries, Doug (Eyechart) Gwosdz of San Diego. But it ain't like it once was. Some of us believe that the Mets would have won the National League pennant last year if they had had better nicknames. Keith (Mex) Hernandez. Gary (the Kid) Carter. Howard (Hojo) Johnson. Pitiful, pallid, pathetic. Badminton or ice dancing, maybe, but not baseball, not like Abba Dabba Tobin or Dandelion Fritz Pfeffer. The Mets need dynamic, savory nicknames, and they have the raw material: Darryl (Daiquiri) Strawberry, Ron (Destiny) Darling, Bob (Uneeda) Ojeda. Then there's the Dodgers' Orel Hershiser, a real name that sounds like a German dentifrice.

Baseball toes the mound of literature, which is as it should be, and is part of its charm. Would you permit me just . . . one . . . more? When the One Great Scorer comes to summarize your game, / He writes, not if you won or lost, but what's your baseball name.



On New Zealand's North Island, in stately Government Gardens, two "Kiwis" await their turn at Lawn Bowls, a Down Under sporting tradition dating back to 12th century England.



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